



LEAGUE LINES

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October 2, Tuesday, 5:00 pm, VOTE411 Committee Meeting, 3215 Sunbury Lane, 29205

October 23, Tuesday, 5:30-8:00, 27th Annual "I Believe Anita Hill" Party, 701 Whaley

November 3, Saturday, 9:00-1:00, VOTE411 Soda City 9-1

November 6, Tuesday, 7:00-7:00, General Election Day and municipal elections

November 10, Saturday, LWVSC Board meets in Columbia

January 19, 2019, Saturday, LEAD statewide conference in Columbia at SCEA offices

May 1-3, 2019, Wednesday to Friday, LWVSC Convention in Charleston



WHAT'S INSIDE THIS MONTH?

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PASSING OF SARAH LEVERETTE: From *The State*, "SARAH LEVERETTE was short in stature but a giant among her peers. She will be remembered as a legend to many who had the good fortune of knowing her charm, wisdom, wit, spirit and enthusiasm for life."

[https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestate/obituary.aspx?n=sarah-](https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestate/obituary.aspx?n=sarah-leverette&pid=190172995)

[leverette&pid=190172995](https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestate/obituary.aspx?n=sarah-leverette&pid=190172995)

And from *SC Biznews*: "Particularly for the very few women who were in law school at that time, she was a godsend, a wonderful mentor and encourager," said Jean Toal, who graduated from USC's law school in 1968 and spent hours with Sarah in the law library after being selected to the law review..."

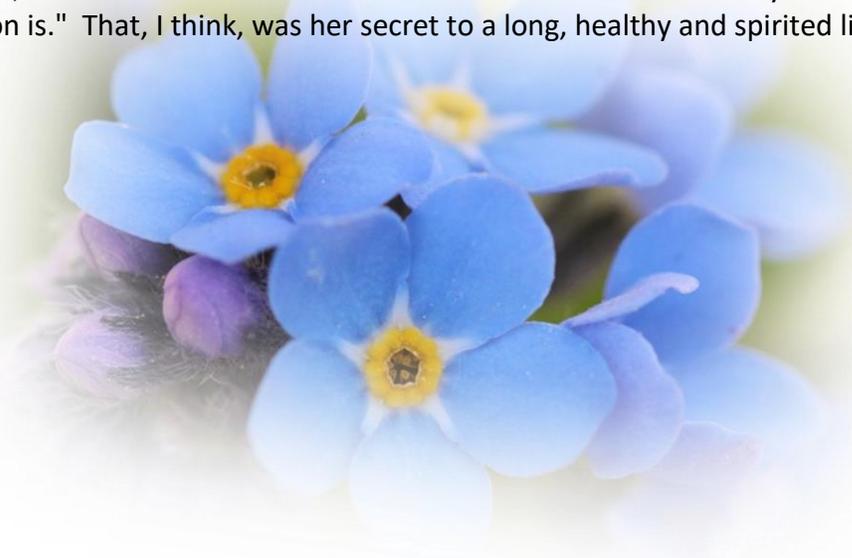
<https://scbiznews.com/news/law/75097/>

"Sarah Leverette was a brilliant lawyer and a humorist," Malissa Burnette said. "She really was hilarious. And to the very end, a humanitarian who cared deeply about other people."

In April, Leverette was named a 2018 Compleat Lawyer, the USC law school's highest honor. "Normally when you introduce the recipient, people wait to hear the citation, and then they begin to applaud," law school dean Robert Wilcox said. "As soon as I began to mention her first name, there was a standing ovation."

Sarah was not only a trailblazer for women but also a leader for social justice for more than 50 years. But more than that, Sarah was a warm, caring friend to all who met her. She had an infectious passion for life and living. She was always forward looking, interested in the world around her, and also in what was around the next corner. Sarah always wanted to be "where the action is." That, I think, was her secret to a long, healthy and spirited life.

JoAnne Day



VIEW FROM RIVER'S EDGE

Janelle Rivers

Even old jokes can carry an element of truth. In an earlier era, a professor was berating a college freshman for poor academic performance.

Frustrated, the professor announced, "I can't decide whether your problem is ignorance or apathy!"

The freshman's rapid rejoinder was, "I don't know, and I don't care."

Think of the current political situation. If you see some truth in the humor, then apply your own synonyms for ignorance and apathy. Gullibility and unconcern? Inexperience and indifference?

Whatever their individual reasons, especially in midterm elections, many voters have stayed home from the polls. Maybe they lacked information about the candidates in the primaries. Maybe they didn't like the options that were available on the general election ballot. Maybe they've adopted a more cynical stance—thinking their voices won't be heard and their votes won't make much difference. Perhaps they don't know about VOTE411.com.

The League's new mission statement, "Empowering voters. Defending democracy," gives us our marching orders. **The League runs on volunteer power.** We haven't been big fundraisers, but our members have a vast reserve of energy and a huge desire to make our government as good as it can be.

The November general election is critically important for the future of our nation. We need active, informed voters, and **what will get them to the polls is volunteer power.**

Our nonpartisan volunteers do a terrific job of registering voters and distributing voter information literature, most recently emphasizing VOTE411.org as a valuable resource to help voters make informed choices and plan their selections before they go to the polls. Officers and off-board leaders handle the day-to-day functions and plan events. Our capable Communications Committee and *League Lines* staff keep members informed about developments related to current government issues. Observer corps members and portfolio directors pay attention to what's happening in government at local, state, and national levels, and work to keep us abreast of current concerns.

League members put energy into expressing their opinions. All League members, as individual advocates, and the designated officers who speak in the name of the League of Women Voters, work to influence elected officials to enact laws that are consistent with the League's carefully researched consensus-based policy positions. <https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>.

Most League members—all except for those few officers whose positions require that they remain neutral—are free to work on campaigns and promote the candidates of their choice.



Many League members volunteer time and energy and contribute money to campaigns, as well as to the League.

The lyrics of *Let's All Vote* tell us, **"It's time to come to the aid of America!"** It's true. Volunteering has never been more important. Give some of your time and energy to promote good government, especially between now and the November 6 general election. Fight ignorance and apathy. Help counter inexperience and indifference. Find your own best way to express your concerns and your patriotism, whether through the League or in a campaign, and put your own volunteer power into action!

(Note: You can listen to *Let's All Vote* by League member Vivian Harte at [http://letsallvote.us/.](http://letsallvote.us/))



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HIGH SCHOOL VOTER

REGISTRATION UPDATE: The Lexington County Voter Registration office estimates that they received approximately 500 new voter registrations for Lexington County citizens as the result of the League's work in the Lexington District One high schools of Gilbert, White Knoll, River Bluff and Lexington. Many volunteers including **Sharon Ayling, Barbara Beeler, Debbie Dickinson, Phyllis Jones, Elizabeth Jones, Pat Mohr, Janelle Rivers, Sue Ureda, Janie White, and Robin White** worked to make this incredibly successful voter registration drive possible.

River Bluff high school voter registration volunteers—left to right: USC Student intern **Grant Bradford**, **Sharon Ayling, Elizabeth Jones, Debbie Dickinson, Janelle Rivers**

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A NATURALIZATION CEREMONY FOR 31 NEW CITIZENS FROM 18 COUNTRIES

took place at Congaree National Park on August 24. League volunteers **Julie Sellers, Glenda Bunce, Nancy Kreml, Elizabeth McLendon, and Sharon Ayling** helped complete 22 paper voter registration applications and provided information for others to register online. We were warmly welcomed by Congaree Park and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services staff. It was an enjoyable and rewarding experience for us all!



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OTHER NEWS

OBSERVER CORPS SEPTEMBER NEWS:**L. J. Cole**

9/18 Richland County Council**Observer: Dale Baer**

- Greg Pearce noted that FEMA involvement in the Great Flood of 2015 is winding down and the blue-ribbon ad hoc committee's work is coming to a close.
- Pam Dukes, Executive Director of Senior Resources, thanked Council for their support of work that is designed to keep seniors in their homes, a much more cost-saving option than in an institution. Programs like Meals on Wheels work during natural disasters by providing advance non-perishable meals in the event of a suspension of services.
- During Citizen's input, three citizens made requests for enforceable ordinances to remove eyesores and nuisances from neighborhoods that are without covenants to deal with these issues. Council members took the time to address the issue and supported it.

9/21 Richland County Board of Elections**Observer: Robin White**

- The director discussed the commitments to support the general election. Overseas and Military ballots will be mailed 09/22. Test program from the state will be run next week. Absentee voting in person at the county office starts 10/08. Three satellite locations were announced (Adult Center Parklane, Ballentine Community Center, Garners Ferry Adult Center). Parking is a concern for the Parklane location. An estimated 15,000 paper ballots and 10,000 absentee ballots are needed.
- Repairs have been made to 100 machines and there are 1,093 machines ready for use. Approximately 970 will be in the field, and 25 machines in the county lobby and absentee voting sites, leaving 148 machines ready to respond to issues.
- The Chair, Adell Adams, retired today. Jane Emerson becomes the acting Chair until a replacement is approved by the Governor. At that time, the new full board will elect a permanent Chair and Vice Chair. Several board members said that they were changing the rules, but there was no way of determining what plan they had in mind as no board rules were available.

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PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Pam Craig

I attended a panel discussion on gun violence in South Carolina as a League member and staffed a table to provide anyone who was interested with information on voter registration (e.g. absentee voting, registration). Of course, everyone who attended the discussion was a registered voter, but we suggested that they take a copy of our DEO (Directory of Elected Officials) for Richland and Lexington counties and other relevant information that we had on display.

Those of you who might be thinking “I can’t do that because I need to know how to ___” are wrong. You do need to be pleasant and friendly and, in return, you will probably learn something and meet League members you do not already know. For instance, Phyllis Jones, League member, showed me an adorable video of her granddaughter.

The panel at the Shandon Presbyterian Church on August 26 deserves our thanks: Jane Massey, Randy Covington, and the Honorable Beth Bernstein and Joel Lourie. The purpose of the discussion was to help educate people to successfully advocate for “**gun safety**”—the focus phrase. Sadly, as the topic was being discussed, there was a shooting in Jacksonville, Florida at a video game competition where two people were killed and several injured.

The PowerPoint presentation started off with some basic facts about South Carolina: South Carolina is the tenth deadliest state in the United States. The United States has more mass shootings than any other country in the world. We are 5% of the world’s population but account for 31% of the shootings. Since 2009, we have had 288 mass shootings—more than any other nation. Mexico is second with eight. Yes, you read it right: EIGHT—fewer than ten in Mexico.

Congress has not passed a major gun-control law in 25 years, while 26 states have passed 55 gun-safety bills in the months following the Parkland massacre. South Carolina is not among those 26 states. Since 2017, 50 have been introduced in the South Carolina Legislature, but none have passed.

Under current South Carolina law, if a background check on a potential gun buyer is not completed in three days, a licensed dealer can sell the weapon. Almost 90% of South Carolina’s citizens support closing the incomplete background check loophole. In states that require background checks on all handguns, there are 46% fewer women shot by intimate partners and 48% fewer deaths of law enforcement officers killed by handguns.

What to do? In America, 70% of us do not own a weapon. Therefore, it is a vocal minority that is keeping gun legislation off the table. That is why we need to talk about “gun safety” so that others will not see it as a restriction of the Second Amendment. Let us focus on expanding background checks to five days. South Carolina could also expand the background check rule to cover private sales and gun shows. South Carolina could ban assault weapons and require adequate training. Not changing our laws is costing us lives.

As part of your autumn plans, write to your legislators and tell them how you feel about gun legislation. In fact, write a list of issues you care about. Send some short letters telling them what you support and keep in touch. Letters sent by mail are more effective than emails or form letters because they are more personal. Use that iPad, Mac Notebook or write a letter as you listen to the news about what your legislator did not do. Also, follow your state legislator on the *scstatehouse.gov* website, and write about what you learn. Visit the website and experiment.

Legislators may not think they are at risk because of poor gun safety regulation, but US House Representative Scalise, I am sure, privately thinks otherwise. After all, he had bodyguards at the congressional practice session where he was shot. If our own state had enacted an extension to the background check legislation, State Senator Pinckney might still represent his district, and eight of his parishioners would still be alive. Gun violence is happening everywhere, and it can soon come to a location near you.

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ABSENTEE VOTING: If you are unable to go to the polls on election day, are disabled or are age 65 or older, you may be able to vote early by absentee ballot. Absentee voting in South Carolina is available for 14 categories of voters. These categories include

- Persons who are physically disabled
- Students attending school outside their county of residence and their spouses and dependents residing with them
- Persons who for reasons of employment will not be able to vote on election day
- Persons who plan to be on vacation outside their county of residence on election day
- Persons attending sick or physically disabled persons
- Persons 65 of age or older

Visit <https://www.scvotes.org/absentee-voting> for a complete list of reasons to vote absentee. If you want to email the following friends, contact Suzanne

Vote absentee in person at your county elections office for 30 days prior to an election. For the fall 2018 election, absentee in-person voting continues through November.

Richland County absentee in-person voting will be held at four locations. The main location is the office of the Richland County Board of Voter Registration & Elections, 2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29202. In addition, Richland County will have absentee satellite locations from October 22 through November 5 at Parklane Adult Activity Center, Ballentine Community Center and Garners Ferry Adult Activity Center. Voting hours will be 9-5 at all locations. Absentee voting begins at the main office on October 8 from 8:30-5, Monday-Friday and on Saturday, November 3 from 8:30-1. There is no Saturday voting at the three satellite centers.

Lexington County absentee in-person voting will be available only at the Office of Voter Registration and Elections, Monday-Friday, 8-5, at 605 West Main St., Suite 105, Lexington.

To vote absentee by mail, get your application at SCVOTES.org or by contacting your county elections office. Return your absentee application by mail as soon as possible to ensure adequate mail delivery time.

BE SURE YOU HAVE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PHOTO IDS: SC Driver's License, SC DMV ID Card, SC Voter Registration Card with Photo, Federal Military ID or US Passport. If you do not have one of the Photo IDs, make your voting experience as fast and easy as possible by getting a free one from DMV or your county elections office, available even on election day.

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Under the expert oversight of **Melissa Augsburger**, VOTE411.org is ready for clicks!

Special thanks go to telephone callers **JoAnne Day, Debbie Dickinson, Ann Humphries, Jane McGregor, Rosemary Greco, and Vicki Vance**. They contacted primary candidates who had not responded and the nonpartisan candidates who were not in the primary, 101 total, to urge them to provide their background and answer the League's questions....Keller Barron

411 UPDATE: All statewide races, for example the Governor, are being handled by the Charleston League. The Columbia Area League is managing all SC House races in Lexington/Richland, the county councils, school boards, Cayce Town council/mayor, Lexington Town council/mayor, SC Senate Seat 20, and US House District 2. Currently, 40 out of 99 candidates have responded for the local races we are covering; out of the candidates for US House seat District 2, only Joe Wilson has not responded. Please continue to ask candidates to participate if you notice a response missing on VOTE411.org. Melissa

Do you know the School Board Candidates running in your School District?

Mayor? Town Council?

CLICK VOTE411.org

PUT in YOUR ADDRESS and find ANSWERS to our QUESTIONS

SCHOOL BOARD

1. What are the top challenges facing your school district, and what are your recommendations and plans to meet these challenges?
2. Describe your specific knowledge and skill sets and explain how they will enable the school board to function more effectively.
3. What is the role of the school board in addressing the teacher shortage and promoting success in the classroom?

MAYOR and TOWN COUNCIL

1. What are your background and qualifications for this elected office?
2. What would you identify as the top 3 challenges in your town, and what solutions do you recommend?

LEAGUE PROVIDES CIVICS RESOURCES FOR SC HIGH SCHOOLS: Social studies coordinators, supervisors, and lead teachers in all South Carolina school districts now have a resource that explains South Carolina's election system and permits eligible students to register to vote online. Lexington School District One teachers and social studies coordinator, Albert Robertson, worked with the League of Women Voters to develop and field test the resources during President's Week last year. The League of Women Voters of South Carolina endorsed the project. Members of the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area developed and refined a script and PowerPoint that were distributed without cost to all district social studies coordinators in South Carolina for use by teachers of American Government and Economics classes.

Local League members **Carol Robinson, Harriet Williams, Pat Mohr, Margaret Anne DuBose,** and **Janelle Rivers** comprised the group who authored, edited, and revised the materials. League members and volunteers who assisted with field testing in four high

schools included **Sharon Ayling, Barbara Beeler, Debbie Dickinson, Phyllis Jones, Elizabeth Jones, Pat Mohr, Janelle Rivers, Sue Ureda, Janie White, and Robin White.**

Robertson stated, "It was great to have LWV members come and help teachers present the information. We are always looking for experts to have come into our classrooms, and the students responded very well to the LWV members. We want our students to grow into active and engaged citizens, and we appreciate the time and efforts of the LWV in helping to put these fantastic resources together!"

Teachers in all parts of the state can use this resource to introduce students to the state's election site, www.scvotes.org, where anyone who is eligible can register by entering their driver's license and social security numbers. The online system verifies information with the Department of Motor Vehicles, and the State Election Commission mails the voter identification card to the address that is on the voter's driver's license.

The League also provided two other resources. Teachers were offered a PowerPoint presentation with information about how to use ProCon.org, a nationally respected resource for examining pros and cons of a variety of policy issues and how sources are documented. The other resource explained how to access the League's candidate voter information web site, www.VOTE411.org,

The League supports www.VOTE411.org, which allows candidates to enter their own information prior to an election and provides prospective voters with customized ballot information. Users can use the site to browse information about elections and candidates all over the United States. Most importantly, if voters choose to enter their addresses, the www.VOTE411.org website will filter information for their local precincts and provide information about the races and referendum questions that they will see when they go to the polls. The site does not collect names or addresses of users; however, potential voters have the option of sending themselves an email with a reminder of any selections they choose to make while they are studying the information on the web site.

Members of the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area have volunteered to assist schools in whatever ways the schools desire, including providing guest speakers or voter registration resources. The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes individual candidates or political parties; instead, the League works to empower and inform voters.

Albert Robertson, president of the South Carolina Social Studies Supervisors Association and Coordinator of Social Studies in Lexington School District One, said feedback has been positive. Teachers appreciate having additional resource materials, and this project has provided another way for League members to help educate students about the responsibilities of citizenship and the importance of voting.

WHAT IS OUR POLITICAL CONDITION? America is in a dangerous condition and this November's congressional elections are critical to prevent further rise of authoritarianism in Washington. Current SC congressional representatives seem to lack the political fortitude to oppose presidential power out of fear of being attacked. Voters must exert themselves if we

want a congress with a broad vision of the role of government in protecting the public welfare and our institutions and laws. Attacks on our free press as an enemy of the people is just one example of the dangers we face.

Fortunately, SC does not require voters to register by party affiliation. However, political party organizations are generally helpful to the candidate nominating process by making it less cumbersome. But when demagogues and extremists take over the process we get extremist general election candidates who, when elected, go on to achieve power and influence over government institutions and harm our democracy.

Detailed historical analysis of how failed democracies lost their way when their citizens and leaders failed to speak out against authoritarians is well documented by respected Harvard professors Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt in their book, *How Democracies Die*. Their studies describe these four common characteristics of failed democracies:

1. Rejection of or weak commitment to democratic rules of the game.
2. Denial of the legitimacy of political opponents.
3. Toleration or encouragement of violence.
4. Readiness to curtail civil liberties of opponents, including media. This includes praising the repressive measures of other governments (Is Russia an example?). Major foundations of a sustainable democracy are the constitutional guarantees of a free press and the balance of powers between Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court.

Some of our congressmen are part of a group or faction that is failing us now. They are quietly complicit by not pointing out or speaking up about the attacks on a free press and concerned citizens who speak up. Does fear of attacks on themselves silence them? Are they afraid they may end up on a presidential enemies list?

Availability of information and facts by studious citizens is unprecedented in our internet world. Yet, it is troubling there are so many citizens who rely on some specific media or social connection for information and don't read or search out information that conflicts with their preconceived belief about an issue or politician, including our president. Social media and disinformation heavily influence these citizens. They rarely verify what they have heard. It's like a cancer that without treatment is spreading its roots and breaking down society and relationships. One possible cure is to choose new and effective treatments in this November's election.

More people are independently seeking accurate information and not relying on partisan voices that are not objective. They can and will make a difference if they vote in large numbers in the general election. I hope they will.

Chester Sansbury

HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT'S TRUE ANYMORE? Check out [goo gl/RRh558](https://goo.gl/RRh558) – from LWV Northern California

SECURING THE VOTE: PROTECTING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY—New Report of National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine

The paperback version of this 160-page report is \$50, but you may download the report as a free PDF at: <https://www.nap.edu/download/25120>.

There is a twelve-page summary of their recommendations for conducting elections, including the one in November 2018: "4.12 Every effort should be made to use human-readable paper ballots in the 2018 federal election. All local, state, and federal elections should be conducted using human-readable paper ballots by the 2020 presidential election."



Websites:

National: www.lwv.org/

State: <http://lwvsc.org/>

Columbia: www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Facebook: *To see our Facebook Page:*

1. Go to YOUR Facebook page and begin typing "**League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area**" in the search box until a list pops up.
2. Click on the name **League of Women Voters of Columbia, SC** with the familiar blue LWV Logo on the left.

That's it!

Twitter:

1. Go to YOUR Twitter account and search for the League of Women Voters Columbia Area and connect.

Facebook and Twitter email address:
[@LWVColumbiaSC](https://twitter.com/LWVColumbiaSC)

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 **Columbia City Council**
 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM City Hall 1737 Main Street Columbia, SC 29201
 Check website at www.columbiasc.net for more information.

 **Lexington County Council**
 Meet: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 4:30 PM 2nd Floor County Administration Building 212 South Lake Drive Lexington, SC 29072
 For confirmation of meeting dates, please call 785-8103 or check website www.lex-co.com

 **Richland County Council**
 Meet: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM 2nd Floor County Administration Building 2020 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29202.
 For more information, please contact the Clerk of Council Office @ (803) 576-2060 or check: www.richlandonline.com

