



VOTER IMPACT

LWV OF THE PIEDMONT TRIAD
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VOLUME XXXI ISSUE 4 JANUARY 2019

Lunch with the League “Redistricting Reform”

Dr. Jennifer Bremer

Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at noon

LWVPT returns to Holy Trinity Haywood Duke Room

607 N. Greene Street, Greensboro, NC 27401

Doors open at 11:30

Buffet Lunch is \$11.00. See payment protocol on page 3.

Make reservations with Bonnie Kristoff (336-547-0824) or send email to
Reservations@lwwpt.org by January 9.

We need to secure redistricting reform in the coming 2019-2020 legislative session if we are to protect our democracy from another decade of rigged maps and unaccountable representatives. To identify the key choices for design of a commission that can end extreme gerrymandering and pass the legislature, the League completed a White Paper study analyzing 50 bills introduced last year in 15 state legislatures and all 29 current commissions.

The paper identified Five Principles for Reasonable Redistricting Reform that provide a sound foundation for designing a citizen commission to draw North Carolina’s maps. Based on these findings, the League is helping to launch a broad-based, bipartisan coalition, Fair Districts NC, to build support for reform.

Dr. Jennifer Bremer, who led the White Paper study and is leading the Fair Districts NC initiative for the League, will speak to us about how we can meet the challenge of redistricting reform in time for the 2021 redrawing. She will provide a brief overview of gerrymandering and why it is so destructive to our democracy, summarize the key findings from the White Paper, and brief us on the Fair Districts NC initiative.

(continued on p. 4)



Dr. Jennifer Bremer
Biography on p. 4

Please refer to this page when you need to contact a board member. When emails are shared by two people, each will get the message.

Board of Directors (2018-2019)

President:

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The board of directors of the LWVPT also serves as the board of directors of the LWVPT Education Fund. The meetings are separate but usually on the same day. Members are welcome to attend either or both meetings.

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Message from the President

Happy New Year to everyone!!! I hope your holidays were wonderful!

As usual, the new year promises to be busy for the League. We have exciting programs coming up, and soon we'll begin planning for the Annual Meeting in May. There are bylaws to review for possible revisions, nominations for positions on the Board of Directors, reports about progress made during the past year, and goals we want to meet in the coming year. If you are interested in serving on the Board or want to recommend someone who would be a good leader, please feel free to contact Janice Siebert, who chairs our Nominating Committee. As a former LWVPT President herself, Janice (and the rest of the Committee) is working hard to recruit strong leaders for the coming years! (nominate@lwvpt.org) If you are interested in helping with the Annual Meeting, please let me know. (president@lwvpt.org)

There are several events occurring in January. On Jan. 21, the Greensboro Human Relations Commission will honor Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with a memorial breakfast. As in years past, LWVPT will host a table. If you are interested in reserving a spot at that table please contact me by Jan. 9 (president@lwvpt.org). There are 10 seats at the table and each is available for \$20. The Breakfast will be held at the Koury Center 7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

If you can't make it to the Women's March in Washington, DC, there are at least three in North Carolina.

- Asheville -- Sunday, Jan. 20, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. -- Pack Square Park
- Charlotte -- "Women United March" -- Saturday, Jan. 26, 11 a.m. at First Ward Park, E 8th St and N Brevard St, Charlotte, North Carolina 28202
- Raleigh -- Saturday, Jan. 26, 10:00 a.m. at Halifax Square, 6 W. Jones St.

The LWVPT weekly Alert includes information about events that are coming up within the next few weeks. If you have an item to share in the Alert, you may send that to me (president@lwvpt.org).

We appreciate all of our members and are very interested in including everyone who wants to be involved in our various round tables, committees and programs. Please let us know if there is some way you want to be involved.

Wishing you and yours a wonderful 2019!!!!

Vicki White-Lawrence, President

<p>Reservations for: Lunch With the League on January 15, 2019</p> <p>To pay by check, please print out and complete this form and mail to: The League of Women Voters of the Piedmont Triad PO Box 9721 Greensboro, NC 27429</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ Zip Code _____</p> <p>Phone (home) _____</p> <p>Phone (cell) _____</p> <p>Email address _____</p> <p>Number of Reservations @ \$11.00 each _____</p> <p>Amount enclosed _____</p>	<p>LWVPT members and guests are asked to prepay for lunch at our Lunch with the League meetings by mailing a check to LWVPT for \$11.00 or paying online with a credit card or via Pay Pal. Those not having lunch simply preregister as usual by calling or emailing Bonnie Kristoff, 336-547-0824 or bbklunch@gmail.com or following the instructions sent with the email message. These procedures expedite the check-in process and make certain payment is made for a reserved lunch.</p>
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Dr. Bremer is a policy analyst specializing in governance reform with more than 40 years of experience in the US and 30 countries. She leads the League’s Fair Elections Action Team and is a member of the state board. Her academic credentials include a doctorate in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School, a master’s in development economics from Stanford, and a BA in political science from Columbia University’s Barnard College.

Dr. Jennifer Bremer

League of Women Voters of North Carolina

Dr. Bremer is a policy analyst, researcher, and economist with over 35 years of experience in governance reform and private enterprise development in the United States and more than 30 countries. She currently focuses on public governance reform in North Carolina, where she serves as a member of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina board and leads the League’s Fair Elections Action Team (FEAT).

FEAT works on redistricting reform and other election-related issues, including judicial selection reform. This year, she led a study team examining alternative approaches to redistricting reform under consideration in states that, like North Carolina, do not have citizen-initiated referendum, which led to the formulation of five principles for reasonable redistricting reform, the basis for the League’s new strategy to end gerrymandering in our state. Prior to her retirement in 2016, she divided her career between academia and professional roles with leading organizations in the international development field, including establishing and chairing the Department of Public Policy and Administration at the American University in Cairo and heading the Kenan Institute Washington Center (a program of UNC’s business school). She holds a PhD in public policy from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, an MA from Stanford University in development economics, and a BAcl from Barnard College of Columbia University.

New members

We would like to welcome the new members who have joined us since November 1: Rhonda Brown, Zachariah Usey, Ruthie Rogers, Margaret Safrit, and Bobby Brasher. We hope that we will see you at one of our functions soon in the New Year!

So the League is nonpartisan. Does that mean we're not political?

No. We're nonpartisan in that we do not support or oppose any party or candidate. Via our Voter Guides and forums we bring the issues to ALL candidates with neutral questions that do not suggest a right or wrong answer. Voters, after hearing or reading their responses, decide who gets their vote. We are political in that, after study and consensus, we take positions on issues, we educate people and we advocate on behalf of those issues.

Voter Registration Rolled This Fall into Election Day 2018

A major reason for the League's "being" is voter education and voter registration. Although much of the planning toward this raison d'être occurred in the summer, beginning in late August to Election day, LWVPT was involved in 11 planned/organized events running from a couple of hours to one day in length as well as one 5-week long "event." In late August Gloria Harris led VR at the Naturalization Ceremony as she does every quarter. There were 16 new registrations. Andy Stern led a voter registration at NC A&T State University Aug. 30 which Catherine Magid planned with the University. Registrants numbered 112.

A couple of members joined in VR events even though their work schedules gave them few opportunities. Donna Scheidt received "on-the-job" training at High Point's Hi Fest September 8 and Jessica Goodman received training so she could help UNCG VR four days later. Several veteran VR volunteers who hadn't volunteered recently for various reasons "re-upped" to help with VR at UNCG and other places such as Lynn Bennett (who also was involved in an attempt by SJRT to hold VR for the inmates of Guilford County jail --- David Dalton and Sue Stinson were "lead" with the logistics on that effort) and a few long-term League members, who answered the call for more help such as Barbara Grills worked VR for the first time.

It was often difficult for members to participate with VR events when a majority of this fall's VR events were during a weekday. Therefore, we had several faithful VR volunteers who joined our League members at UNCG's VR "event" that ran from Sept. 4 - Oct. 4 Tues-Thurs 10 am – 4 pm as arranged by Catherine with UNCG in July. Again Andy Stern was charged with "recruitment" of volunteers using past "outside" volunteers as well as consistent VR volunteers from the League's VR list and people who learned about it and contacted League VR to be trained to help. Quite a few who called to participate in response to Alert appeals for VR help were unable to do so when they learned of the VR event times. We are grateful for their offer and have retained their contact info, with their permission, for future events that require many "person-hours."



Times Up! Rita Layson oversees the 425th registrant at UNCG as he finishes his VR form at 4 pm Oct. 4th.

At WFU's Deacs Decide event Sept. 12 Howard Pearre worked VR with President Vicki White-Lawrence and membership co-chair Jean Alsop who were present to promote LWVPT and distributed information. He worked VR Oct. 2 at WF Baptist Medical Center where the League's presence was requested for the benefit of their residents by Peter Lichstein of the NC chapter of the American College of Physicians and Professor and Vice Chair for Education in the Department of Internal Medicine of Wake Forest School of Medicine. We had Forsyth County voting materials at both of these events. Howard agreed to serve as our Winston-Salem "substation" vice chair (or maybe that is our W-S arm chair??) to both staff events in W-S and to keep an eye for events with which the League might partner to provide VR.

Venues to which the League was invited to provide VR this fall included Spears YMCA, FAACT at their Greensboro Pride (which was postponed due to weather until after the VR deadline but we still did VR/voter education), local National Treasury Employees Union at Logan's Roadhouse, and Twilight High School (for which LWVPT was specifically requested to discuss, in a classroom setting, the non-partisan role of LWVPT and importance of voting as well as provide the usual voting materials and registration completion). Through a little tenacious "lobbying," the League had a first-time GTCC-Jamestown VR. In 4 hours LWVPT members registered 30 and interacted with at least 30 more. (We almost ran out of voting resource materials and had to ask people to photograph copies of materials taped to the table). Additionally, League members held VR this fall in "nooks and crannies" such as the IRC and a soup kitchen (with Sue Stinson organizing those two).



Lesley Watts (Spears YMCA) posted on FB this photo (with a reminder to Y members that VR was in progress that evening) just after this photo was taken of her (center) with L WVPT members Barbara Carter, Gay Bowman, Tracy Nash, & Gary Kenton at VR table at Spears YMCA.

Thanks to all who submitted ideas for VR venues even if the venue, for whatever reason, didn't work this fall. Thanks to all the L WVPT members who participated in VR efforts this fall as well as to Ellen Weiner for her help with publicity. The ones not previously named in text or captions are: *Kay Brandon, Geoffrey Butler, Betty Byron, Mary Davis, Mary Eubanks, Peggy Ferree, Terri Flam-Goldberg, Karen Filipowski, Beverly Grier, Cathy Jackson, Sue and Jack Jezorek, Lyn McCoy, Donna Peterson, Marlene Pratto, and Sara White.* Additionally, the League appreciates non-L WVPT member volunteers who helped "staff" the VR this year at the UNCG and A&T events: Kathie Adams, Bev and Larry Brenowitz, Joy Brown, Sherry Dickson, Bobby Doolittle, Jackie Foreman, Martha Hockstra, Ginny Hultquist, Maria Johnson, Naomi Jones, Hope McLean, Betsy Oldenberg, Alan Spiewak, and Kay Zimmerman. Since completed voter registration forms are a tangible result of VR activity, Voter Education is often the unsung VR partner but a good registration "drive" should provide information related to voting and elections both verbally and in print for not only persons completing registration form but also interested passers-by. Even if there are very few completed registration forms to show for our efforts at the end of the day, our "distribution" of information provides an important and vital service to citizens.

The bottom line: since August 24th, the League's VR endeavors before the November 6th general election resulted in over 650 registrations!!! Kudos to L WVPT for a great effort!

Barbara Carter, VR Chair

The L WVPT Social Justice Roundtable

In a long overdue start to the reform of America's badly broken Criminal "Injustice" System, Congress has passed the bipartisan First Step Act. While it moves slowly to correct a range of injustices by sensible moves such as giving judges more leeway in sentencing drug offenders, we in North Carolina, led by a special panel of the NC Courts Commission, can focus on reforming our state's badly flawed cash bail system that punishes the poor while doing little to make our communities safer. Those who were able to attend the November 27 Lunch with The League heard an excellent overview of the problems with cash bail by NC Policy Watch investigative reporter Joe Killian.

In 2019, the Social Justice Round Table is planning a series of educational presentations on aspects of criminal justice reform for which we in North Carolina can advocate. All members of the L WVPT are urged to submit their suggestions for program topics and speakers to Anna Fesmire, SJRT Chair at arhfesmire@gmail.com by January 31. Please include the full name, title and contact information for prospective speakers as well as the speaker's specific area of expertise.

All members and supporters of the L WVPT are welcome to attend the SJRT Working Group meeting on Friday January 11 at 3:00 pm at the Glenwood Branch Library, 1901 West Florida Street.

Anna Fesmire, Social Justice Roundtable Chair

Report from our Treasurer

LWVPT General (Advocacy) Fund:

At the close of 2018, the General Fund remains “in the black” due to our increasing membership and the generosity of our General Fund Donors. The Board of Directors and I want to thank all of our members and donors for their support of the League’s mission in 2018. We are looking forward to the challenges of 2019!

LWVPT General (Advocacy) Fund Donors in December include:

- Lynn Bennett
- Diana Clark
- Peter Smith
- Eileen Stirling

LWVPT Education Funds – Sally Austin Fund and LWVPT Education Fund:

The Executive Committee and members of the Voter Registration team agreed not to pursue the LWVUS grant opportunity due to the timing of the High School voter registration project. We will look for additional LWVUS grant opportunities in the future.

Contributors to the LWVPT Education Funds in December include:

- D. D. Clark (Sally Austin Fund)
- Laurey Solomon (upcoming Oberlander Event)

Donations to all LWVPT funds can be made via the LWVPT.org website or by check following the mailing instructions in the box.

Respectfully,
Sandra Colyer, Treasurer

Make **tax deductible** donations to the
"LWVPT Education Fund, Inc." online
at http://www.lwvpt.org/donate_form.html
or by mail to:
LWVPT Education Fund
P O Box 9721
Greensboro, NC 27429
Using the same information, you may also
make **non-deductible** donations to
"LWVPT" (operating fund), used for
advocacy on issues.



@LWVPT is now on Twitter!

*Please follow us and tell your friends to do so, too.
Questions? Contact our Twitter Master, Tyler Daye: TylerCDaye@gmail.com*

Immigration and Race, Part One

"Trump defends the use of tear gas on migrants." "U.S. says asylum seekers must now wait in Mexico." "Boy dies [in Oakland, CA] after Yemeni mom fought travel ban to see him again." "Migrant kids held in mass shelters a 'moral disaster.'"

The realities are monstrous. In the Sunday December 23 *New York Times*, Michelle Alexander writes of the "moral quagmire we've created by treating desperately poor people as a problem that can best be addressed by border walls, tear gas, detention camps, militarized policing and mass deportation -- except of course, for the relatively few 'deserving' individuals who may be granted legal citizenship (typically after years of waiting and hundreds or thousands of dollars in lawyer's fees) if they can win asylum.

"Reaching for a radically more humane immigration system is not pie-in-the-sky, utopian dreaming. But it does require a certain measure of humility on the part of those of us who have benefitted from birthright citizenship. Rather than viewing immigrants as seeking something that we, Americans, have a moral right to withhold from them, we ought to begin by acknowledging that none of us who were born here did anything to deserve our citizenship, and yet all of us -- no matter where we were born -- deserve compassion and basic human rights.

"Not only does birthright citizenship bestow upon us a privileged status that we haven't earned; our nation's unparalleled wealth and power, as well as our actual borders, lack a sturdy moral foundation. But for slavery, genocide and colonization, we would not be the wealthiest, most powerful nation in the world -- in fact, our nation would not even exist.

"After centuries of struggle, including a civil war, we now claim to understand that all people -- not just propertied white men -- are created equal with basic inalienable human rights. If this is true, on what moral grounds can we greet immigrants with tear gas and lock them in for-profit detention camps, or build walls against the huddled masses yearning to be free?

"We cannot ignore that our foreign policies, trade agreements and military adventures -- including our global drug wars -- have greatly contributed to the immigration crisis that our nation is now trying to solve through border walls and mass deportation."

Two contributors to the *New York Times* 2018 Roundup of selected articles wrote about immigration and racism. From news assistant Isabella Grullon Paz: "There were many important immigration stories this year, all highlighting the difficult journeys immigrants must endure to get into the United States, but we rarely focus on the policies immigrants face once they're here. Black and brown naturalized American citizens -- those who have an accent, those from impoverished countries -- still have to deal with the consequences of racist policy decisions every day, as well as with how these decisions create an unrelenting structure of racial hierarchy in the United States."

And from video journalist Veda Shastri: "This year we saw the escalation of restrictive immigration policies and dehumanizing rhetoric about immigrants. As an American-born child of immigrants, it was additionally difficult to see this exacerbated by the debate over the right of birthright citizenship...It added to the growing anxiety over the potential erosion of civil rights. Race has been at the center of who belongs in America since the nation's inception, but 2018 reflected how some communities continue to struggle to be considered truly American."

Francisco Cantu's new afterward to the paperback edition of [The Line Becomes a River](#) is adapted for the January 17 *New York Review of Books*. Cantu cites Jason De Leon, who argues in [The Land of Open Graves](#) (2015) that the government views undocumented migrants as people "whose lives have no political or social value" and "whose deaths are of little consequence." Cantu writes, "When the violence of our institutions is revealed, when their dehumanizing design is laid bare, it can be too daunting to imagine that we might change things. But what I have learned from giving myself over to a structure of power, from living within its grim vision and helping to harm the people and places from which I came, is that even the most basic act of decency can serve as the spark that will lead one back toward humanity and even the most basic individual interaction has the power to upend the idea of the 'other.' Heeding even these small impulses can serve as a means of extricating ourselves from systems of thought and policy that perpetuate detachment, even in spite of the mechanisms that have been devised to make us believe in individual and nationalistic self-interest.

Continued on p. 9

Susan Sontag stated that compassion is an "unstable emotion" which "needs to be translated into action, or it withers."

The Courage to Change: Immigration and Race Part Two, February 2019 Voter Impact

Whitney Vanderwerff, *Immigration Policy Reform Roundtable*

**The Anthropology Department Presents
The 2019 UNCG Harriet Elliott Lecture Series**

The Human Dimension of Climate Change

**KEYNOTESPEAKER//
DR. RICK POTTS
Director, Human Origins Program
National Museum of Natural History
Smithsonian Institution**

**"The Past is All We Know of the Future, Will We Survive?"*
Tuesday, February 5th @ 6:00 pm
School of Music Recital Hall**

*RECEPTION AND PRESENTATION OF STUDENT RESEARCH TO FOLLOW THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS.

Paleoanthropologist Dr. Rick Potts founded and directs the Human Origins Program at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, Washington, DC. In partnership with the National Museums of Kenya, Rick leads ongoing excavations in southern and western Kenya. After receiving his PhD in biological anthropology at Harvard University in 1982, he taught at Yale before joining the Smithsonian in 1985. Rick's research investigates Earth's environmental dynamics and the processes that have led to human evolutionary adaptations. His ideas about the effect of environmental instability on human evolution have stimulated new studies in Earth sciences, paleontology, and biology. He is curator of the Smithsonian's Hall of Human Origins, and author of the exhibition's volume *What Does It Mean to Be Human?*

PANELDISCUSSION
Climate Change in Our Backyard
Monday, February 4th @ 5:30 pm
School of Education Room 114

PANELISTS//
Dr. Pam Jenkins
Research Professor Emerita, Department of Sociology, University of New Orleans

Dr. Adam Terando
Research Ecologist and Adjunct Professor, US Geological Survey and Department of Applied Ecology, NC State University

Dr. Ryan Emanuel
Associate Professor, Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, NC State University

M O D E R A T O R //
Dr. Susan Andreatta
Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina Greensboro

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Email: lwvptmail@gmail.com
<http://lwvpt.org>

Time-Sensitive material

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January 15, 2019
Please make a reservation
by
January 9**

President *Vicki White-Lawrence*
Vice-president *Anna Fesmire*
Secretary *Sara White*
Treasurer *Sandra Colyer*

“The League of Women Voters encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters does not support or oppose political parties or candidates.”