

Notes From the Chair

Dear Friends,

The disruption I wrote about in the March issue of *Connections* has become the way of the foreseeable future. As we all reel from the effects of the coronavirus and try to come to terms with the 'new normal,' the last few weeks have been filled with devastating news—stories about the killings of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, and Breonna Taylor. For the past five years, we've heard many accounts of other such incidents. Sadly, "I can't breathe" has become the new vernacular.

The demonstrations, protests, and riots of the past few weeks threw me (and I am sure many of you) into a far different reality. Many members expressed their outrage by participating in the local rallies and some even took leadership roles in removing the term 'plantation' from the neighborhoods. Thank you!

As an organization, we are not action-oriented. Our goals are networking, information sharing, and collaborating with other progressive groups. But is that enough? How do we advance the conversation and support the radical change that is necessary? We don't have the answers but we must be willing to be part of the solution.

I share this statement from Michael Whan, LPGA Commissioner: "Change starts with people and there is power in each voice that stands up against racism, sexism, violence, and injustice."

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I invite you to listen with us and then raise our voices.

Steering Committee Actions

The Steering Committee has been meeting via Zoom during this downtime. Some decisions agreed upon:

- Delay dues increase until January 2021
- Recommit to putting efforts on the 2020 election; local, state and national
- Consider Zoom meetings with candidates
- Attempt to reschedule presenters who were canceled in spring 2020
- Strengthen small group initiative; identify potential group leaders
- Evaluate various video conferencing platforms for one that best that fits our needs

Update on *The Glorias*

The Glorias, a biodrama about trailblazing women's rights activist Gloria Steinem, will be released in late September by Roadside Attractions and LD Entertainment. The film stars Julianne Moore in the title role, and several of our own Liberal Ladies have roles as extras in the film.

2020 Member Survey

Thank you to those of you who have completed the 2020 member survey. There is still time to complete it if you have not yet done so. The deadline is July 15. It was emailed to you but can also be found on the website by clicking here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe3FwVjWDWPyYM_9BkXEbqp384e1GxYMIuj24SrduU3FK8FA/viewform

With the extra time we all have, now that we are isolating at home, we hope you'll take a few minutes to complete this annual survey. It is very helpful to the Steering Committee, as it guides programming. Additionally, it gives us a sense of your intended activity level in the COVID-19 days. Lastly, please consider sharing a talent or skill with the organization. You will meet nice women by becoming involved at your comfort level. When task and talent are matched, everyone wins!

Lynn Cordy

MEMBERSHIP

We know that in these stressful times of COVID-19, renewing your membership may not be the first thing on your mind, but please continue to look for reminders from Liberal Ladies of the Lowcountry as to when your membership is about to expire. You will receive three emails reminding you to renew. If you have changed your email address since first registering and have not changed it in your profile (on the website), you may not be receiving these updates. Please periodically check your spam folder, as our reminders may end up there. When your membership expires, the system automatically changes your status to Basic. In Basic, you can sign on to the website but you will be unable to register for any event until you renew your membership.

If you have a question about the status of your membership, please email me at liberal-ladiesmembership@gmail.com

Stay safe and vigilant.
Diane Polevoy

WEBSITE/ COMMUNICATIONS

We are delighted to announce that Liberal Ladies of the Lowcountry will be launching our new website in August.

Our goal with this new website is to improve our event registration process and to make it easier for our volunteers to maintain the website.

You will find familiar content such as Member to Member event posting among our newest features as well as a searchable member directory and small group forums.

Expect an email in August introducing you to our new website with information on how to access it!

The site was developed exclusively by our members. A subset of our Steering Committee guided the design. A special thank you to Ann Durrin, Suzi Huisman, and Mary Ann Littell for sharing their expertise.

*Minerva Castro-Hernandez
Barbara Ulrich*

The screenshot shows the website's home page with a purple header containing navigation links: Home, About Us, Membership, and Events & Programs. A 'Log in' button is in the top right. The main content area features a 'Welcome to the Liberal Ladies of the Lowcountry' section with a photo of women at a table and a text block describing the organization. Below this are two boxes: 'Upcoming events' (NO UPCOMING EVENTS) and 'Member to Member' (No News Today). A 'SMALL GROUPS' section lists 'TENNIS GROUP', 'BOOK GROUP', and 'MEDIA GROUP'. The footer contains copyright information and a note about the website software.

Here's a glimpse of our new Liberal Ladies' website home page.

Member to Member

Calls to Action

- I'm helping to fight #COVID19 – We only need 270 more people on the app to get a COVID estimate for Beaufort County. Please help by taking one minute daily to report how you feel. You also get an estimate of COVID in your area. Download the app.

<https://covid.joinzoe.com/us>

Lauri Mitchell
lauri.mitchell@gmail.com

- Please call Congressman Joe Cunningham and ask him to co-sponsor and support SC House Resolution 988 (sample wording below.)

House Resolution H. Res. 988
Please co-sponsor and support H.Res.988, a resolution to condemn police brutality. The resolution also includes concrete action steps, such as adopting policies at all levels of government that reduce the disparate impact of police brutality on Black and Brown people and other historically marginalized communities. Congress must join protestors' calls for accountability, justice, and an end to police violence and white supremacy.
DC office #202 225-3176

Sandy Stern

- REMOVING THE WORD PLANTATION FROM OUR COMMUNITIES**

There's an initiative in the Lowcountry for plantation communities to change their names. Since the 1990s, many communities in Bluffton and Hilton Head have moved away from including the word plantation in their names. The word plantation is closely tied to slavery in the U.S. and is offensive to many.

HHP Community for Change is spearheading such an initiative to change the name of Hilton Head Plantation. Click here to learn how you can support this name change.

<https://www.hhpcommunity4change.com>

Mary Ann Littell

- Hello Beaufort County Voters,**

With the Covid-19 pandemic still active around the world and expanding in South Carolina, the presidential election in November puts voters at risk. This is not a partisan issue; this is a health issue.

Below is a petition to Governor McMaster and the South Carolina State Legislature to institute **no-excuse, mail-in voting for the November election**. This would be a waiver of the rules about absentee voting which would make it easier for everyone, regardless of age, to vote by mail.

Please read the petition and click on the link to add your name (where it says "Your answer") in support of this request.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BzODOAnFeS_iL4jO8odpCqJyJgR21y_UR7V_sRBB4sZo/

Share this information with all your SC friends, of any political party, and ask them to add their names. We need a groundswell of support to pressure politicians to make this crucial step to protect our health.

We intend to gather names until **July 15** and then present the petition to our state legislators. We expect local media publicity from that, and by including the link, additional people will sign it. We also urge you to **call your state representatives, post this petition on Facebook, and write letters to the editor** to express your desire to see no-excuse, mail-in voting enacted. All these actions will help build the momentum we need.

On July 29, we will gather all the names from around the state and present them with the petition to the Governor and the principal legislators in the Senate and the House. Time is of the essence, because the state will need to print additional mail-in ballots and prepare for counting them at the elections boards when this is instituted. Walk-in voting will not be affected.

No one should be required to choose between protecting their health and casting their vote.

Thank you for your support.
Lynn Cordy for *Indivisible Beaufort*
Lowcountry Indivisible
Sun City Indivisible
Sheldon Township Community
Support Partnership

Member to Member (cont'd)

UPDATE on the ERA

"The winds of justice are picking up speed as they sweep across our great nation. There is growing determination among the American public at large to press for equal justice for black people, gay people, trans people - and female people." **Equal Means Equal**

The recent Supreme Court ruling in support of the LGBTQ+ community affirms that the word "sex" includes ALL Americans regardless of sexual orientation or gender. The time is NOW for the Senate Judiciary Committee to act on SJ Res 6 to Remove the Deadline on Ratification of the ERA. It must be moved out of Committee and on the Senate floor for a vote. Below are the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Let's make another attempt to appeal to our very own SC senators:

Senator Lindsey Graham
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
290 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5972

Senator Tim Scott
(not a member of the Judiciary Committee)
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-6121

NOTE: Senator Graham has already publicly stated that he will not support the ERA. However, he is up for reelection and he represents a state where 52% of the voters are women. Senator Mitch McConnell has gone on record to say that he does not support the ERA. He, too, is up for re-election.

For a letter: Your message should be your own. The essence is that we are asking members of the Judiciary Committee to move **SJ Res 6** (Remove the Deadline on Ratification of the ERA) forward for a vote now, before they break for the July 4 holiday. If it is moved forward to the entire Senate, we know that 48 Senators (including two Republicans and one Independent) have already committed to support the ERA; only three more are needed.

For a phone call: Ask the aide if the Senator will be voting in favor of SJ Res 6. If not, why? (Please let me know how your phone call goes, as I am gathering information for a voter awareness/education.)

156 countries in the world have EQUAL RIGHTS for WOMEN in their constitutions. Let's hope the trend toward chipping away against discrimination and upholding of inalienable rights finally includes WOMEN.

Let's vote for candidates who support the ERA. For more information on where candidates stand on this issue (and others), visit VOTE411.org and see how candidates have responded. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton.

Barb Hammes, ERA Coordinator
LWV, HHI/Bluffton

A NOTE OF APPRECIATION

On May 12, 2020, the General Assembly passed S.635 to extend absentee/mail-in voting to all state voters in the June primary and any needed runoffs. Each of us should extend our appreciation for the leadership of state legislators, for helping to pass this bill that supports safety of everyone to exercise their right to vote without risking their health. Thank you.

We may want to return to our pre-pandemic world, but we are now living in a new world that is here to stay. Mail-in voting has been safely done in several states, with no compromising of the integrity of their voting systems. If other states can do it, so can South Carolina. There is no need to return to a system in which people are forced to make excuses for absentee/mail-in voting.

The League took a lead in defending democracy and empowering voters by asking voters to contact our legislative leaders to make absentee/mail-in voting possible during this election season, and citizens from all walks of life and non-partisan organizations responded in a big way. We now look to our leaders to take the next step and have mail-in voting as the continuing law of our state.

*Patricia Felton-Montgomery, President
League of Women Voters HHI-Bluffton*

Programs Update

If you missed author Steven Hassan's presentation, "The Cult of Trump," it is available on the LLL website. Look for Online Presentations under Activities. Handouts from his talk may also be found there.

Member to Member (cont'd)

Moms Demand Action Group Seek Interested Hosts

Our local Lowcountry Moms Demand Action group has nearly 250 concerned and active contacts on our email list. Our group is in search of interested locals to participate in many ways – large and small – that will continue the important work related to gun sense safety in our communities. If you are interested in hosting a gathering of friends and neighbors at your home, please let us know! We will be happy to assist in meaningful discussion about ways to promote sensible gun legislation. Please watch for the date and information for our next Advocacy Day at the SC Statehouse in Columbia. We hope to again have many attending from the Lowcountry!

Maggie Hammer

Are you connected with your like-minded neighbors?

Ladies, please notice the chart below with neighborhoods, contacts, and email addresses for open-minded social groups developed within certain neighborhoods. Their purpose is two-fold: social interaction and political action within their neighborhoods. This is an initiative of the Liberal Summit.

If you are interested in getting more involved within your community, please contact the person(s) noted.

I realize that not all communities are represented below. Please contact me if you would like to get involved in a community not listed. I will work to get you in touch with other like-minded people near you. My email address is pizzuti@gmail.com. With the November election, it is more important than ever.

Judy Pizzuti

Neighborhoods	Contact Person	Email Address
Belfair	Carol Lobdell	bccdemssc@gmail.com
Colleton River	Melody Irvin	melodyirvin@earthlink.net
Crescent Pointe	Donna Morris	dem29910@yahoo.com
Crescent Pointe	Lynn Cordy	lcordy@me.com
Hampton Lakes	Mitch Siegel	mitchsiegel843@gmail.com
Hilton Head Plant.	Richard Hammes	rhammes@comcast.net
Indigo Run	Jeffrey Ernico	jeffreynico@gmail.com
Moss Creek	Lynne Allen	lga99@mindspring.com
Palmetto Dunes	Doug Luba	dougluba@gmail.com
Palmetto Hall	AJ Gold	avromgold@gmail.com
Port Royal	Nancy Landry	nlandry110@gmail.com
Rose Hill	George Casey	openmindstogether2020@gmail.com
Sea Pines	Clay Barnard	barnardclay46@gmail.com
Westbury Park	Aimee Deverall	adeverall@outlook.com

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP BOOK GROUP

The Liberal Ladies of the Lowcountry Book Club is going strong. We currently have around twenty members who participate regularly. Since social distancing measures have curtailed our in-person book discussions, we have started meeting via Zoom. We've held two Zoom meetings thus far with great success. We will continue to meet monthly using Zoom and have decided to continue meeting into the summer to make up for the months that we missed in the spring. Therefore our meeting schedule and book selections have changed. We have kept our usual meeting day and time of the last Wednesday of the month at 7 PM. Since our group size has become so large, we've been splitting the group into two separate Zoom meetings to allow for everyone's participation in the discussion. One group meets on the regularly scheduled day and the other group meets at another mutually agreed upon day and time. The need for a separate, second session will be determined on a month by month basis as we see how many would like to attend each month. Therefore, there is

no regularly scheduled second session.

Our new club meeting schedule and books for discussion for the next several months are as follows:

Wednesday, July 29 - 7 PM - "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism" by Robin J. DiAngelo. Facilitator: Nancy Contel

Wednesday, August 26 - 7 PM - "Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back" by Janice Nimura. Facilitator: Anita Loeser

Wednesday, September 30 - 7 PM - Any book by Toni Morrison. Facilitator: Babs Hoesel

If you are interested in joining a book club meeting or have any questions, please contact: Nancy Nienstedt at nnienstedt@gmail.com or Susie Knight at sbknight66@gmail.com.

Nancy Nienstedt

Looking for Volunteer Opportunities?

- Interested in helping with **Congressman Joe Cunningham's** campaign?
Email: volunteer@joecunninghamforcongress.com if you'd like to get involved.
- Help elect **Jaime Harrison** to the Senate in 2020 (Send Lindsey to Mar-a-Lago!)
Go to jaimeharrison.com for lots of volunteer opportunities (knock doors, text bank, phone calls, data entry, ride to the polls, voter protection).

Incumbents running for reelection:

- Michael Rivers for SC House District 121 (Beaufort & Colleton Co.) against Eric Erickson
<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/member.php>
- Shedron Williams for SC House District 122 (Beaufort, Hampton, Jasper Co) against Ashley Lawton
<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/member.php?code=1942187268>
- Margie Bright Matthews for SC House District 45 (Allendale, Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Co.) against Rodney Buncum
<https://www.margiebrightmatthewsforsenate.com/>

Get to know and support our local candidates running for the first time.

- Richard Hricik for SC Senate District 43 (Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton Co.) against Chip Campsen
<https://www.richardforsc.com/>
- Nathan Campbell for SC Senate District 46 against Tom Davis: <https://campbell4sc.com/>
- Mitch Siegel for House District 118: <https://www.mitch4sc118.com/>
- Chris DeVries (a Liberal Lady) for SC House District 123: <https://www.facebook.com/>
- Barb Nash for House District 124: <https://www.barbnashsc124.com/>
- Jodie Srutek for Beaufort County Council: <https://www.srutekforcountycouncil.com/> and
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Political-Candidate/Jodie-Srutek-For-County-Council-109048470739435/>

2020 Steering Committee

Chairperson: Lynn Cordy
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Treasurer: Suzi Huisman
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Special Events: Linda Moniuszko & Judy Pizzuti
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