

## **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG RECORDS, 1920-2004**

**50 cu. ft. (65 boxes)**

### **ABSTRACT**

Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters in 1920 during the National American Woman Suffrage Association's annual convention. It was designed to be a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that would assist the 20 million new female voters in understanding and executing their new civic duties. The League was, and continues to be, a strong advocate of politically educated citizens and government and social reform legislation.

Formed in 1922, the Charlotte League of Women Voters had a somewhat rocky beginning. After an initial wave of interest during the early 1920s, membership fell across North Carolina, and in 1936, the Charlotte group, among others, was disbanded when state numbers dropped below National League requirements. Charlotte's women rebounded in 1947, and formed a provisional League. They were granted full status in 1948, and have continued active participation since that time. The League "is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government." Members study topics of interest to voters in their communities, present factual evidence, advocate for or against policies, and present unbiased information to voters regarding elections, candidates, and the voting process.

This collection contains artifacts, audio/visual materials, clippings, documents, negatives, oversized items, photographs, scrapbooks, and slides.

### **ACCESS**

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### **PREFERRED CITATION**

Cite as: Charlotte League of Women Voters Records, 1920-2004, Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library

## **ACQUISITION**

Presented by the League of Women Voters, 1993-2010.

Processed by Hannah Cox, 2017.

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters in 1920 during the National American Woman Suffrage Association's annual convention. Maud Wood Park was elected as the first president. It was designed to be a nonpartisan, grassroots organization that would assist the 20 million new female voters in understanding and executing their new civic duties. The League was, and continues to be, a strong advocate of politically educated citizens and government and social reform legislation. League members are encouraged to be political, while remaining nonpartisan. The League has been involved in many important issues since its inception, and continues to do so today.

Suzanne Bynum and Anna Forbes Liddell organized the North Carolina Suffrage League at a state meeting in Charlotte, in November 1913. This became the North Carolina League of Women Voters in October 1920. Women in Charlotte held informal League meetings from 1920 to 1922, and formed the Mecklenburg County League of Women Voters in February 1922. Mrs. W.C. Shore was the first president, and was shortly succeeded by Gladys Tillett. Unfortunately, this first attempt at League organization in North Carolina did not succeed, and the group was disbanded in 1936 when the number of cities in the state with local units, dropped below National League requirements.

In 1947, Charlotte women made another endeavor at organizing, and formed a provisional League of Women Voters. Fifty women met at the Y.W.C.A., and elected Isabel Peterson president. Annual dues were set at two dollars. The Charlotte League was granted full status in the spring of 1948, and has had active participation ever since. The League "is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government." Members study topics of interest to voters in their communities, present factual evidence, advocate for or against policies, and present unbiased information to voters regarding elections, candidates, and the voting process.

## **REFERENCES**

League of Women Voters. *History*. <http://lwv.org/history>

League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. *About the League*.  
<http://www.goleaguego.org/about.html>

## RELATED MATERIALS

*Associations—League of Women Voters*. (CALL NUMBER: NCR VERTICAL FILES)

Carter, Deborah Brown. *The League of Women Voters, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, 1920-2000*. Charlotte, NC: Urban Research Group, Johnson C. Smith University, 2003.  
(CALL NUMBER: NCR 324.62309 OVERSIZE)

*The Tensions of Their Times: The Story of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg*. Charlotte, NC: WTVI Charlotte Public Television, 2004. (CALL NUMBER: NCR DVD324.62309)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The League of Women Voters Records consists of items primarily related to the Charlotte Chapter of the League, but also includes some information regarding the North Carolina State and National Chapters. The bulk of the collection is from 1950-2000. Overarching series are the Charlotte League, North Carolina State League, and the National League. Each is represented separately, and are broken into the following series: administrative, anniversaries, Charlotte Women's Political Caucus, committees, financial information, histories, publications, public relations, and voter service. Other series are clippings, photographs, negatives, slides, audio/visual, oversize, artifacts, and scrapbooks.

**Administrative, 1920-2001**, includes all administrative records of the Charlotte League of Women Voters. Found here are annual reports; board of directors meeting minutes, correspondence, and rosters; various membership information; and policies and procedures.

**Anniversaries, 1968-2000**, consists of information relating to the 50<sup>th</sup>, 75<sup>th</sup>, 76<sup>th</sup>, 77<sup>th</sup>, and 80<sup>th</sup> Galas.

**Charlotte Women's Political Caucus, 1969-1999**, comprises information relating to this organization, such as reports, correspondence, financials, histories, membership, programs and publications. **Note:** each League level includes information on its corresponding Caucus level.

**Committees, 1950-2000**, contains information such as correspondence, membership, publications, and reports for the Education, Naturalization, Nominating, Observer Corps, and Voter Service Committees.

**Financial Information, 1950-2001**, involves bank statements, budgets, deposit slips, Finance Drive information, grants, ledgers, and reports, including Treasurer's reports.

**Histories, 1920-2004**, encompasses histories of the organization, proclamations, a thesis, and a video script.

**Publications, 1950-2001**, covers general publications and newsletters such as the *Voter*, and *Voter Guides*.

**Public Relations, 1973-2001**, holds Metrolina Viewpoints, press releases, public service announcements, speeches, and TV/radio/newspaper spots.

**Voter Service, 1925-2003**, includes information on the Civics 101 classes, elections, league action and advocacy (which consists of study topics and League positions), and special projects. Study topics are listed by year within each topic.

**Clippings, various**, consists of newspaper clippings concerning a wide variety of topics, most of which have corresponding study topics in the Voter Service series.

**Photographs, 1966-2000**, comprises photographs taken during an assortment of League events. Some are identified, while others are not.

**Negatives, undated**, contains negatives of some of the photographs included in the collection.

**Slides, 1988**, involves a single slide of a League event.

**Audio/Visual, 1984-2000**, encompasses cassettes, diskettes, and VHS tapes of such items as League oral histories, public service announcements, and meeting and gala information.

**Oversize, various**, covers drawings, certificates, and a variety of framed pieces.

**Artifacts, undated**, holds three-dimensional items.

**Scrapbooks, various**, includes over twenty scrapbooks of League history. Some consist of primarily newspaper clippings, and others are focused on League events.

## **SERIES LIST**

<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>BOX</b>	<b>FOLDER</b>
<b>Collection Container List</b>	1	1
<b>Charlotte Chapter, 1920-2004</b>		
Administrative, 1920-2001		
Awards, 1990-2001	1	2
Board of Directors		
Board Orientation		
General		
1983, 1988	1	3
1990-2000	1	4
Undated	1	5
Meetings and Agendas		
1970-1978	1	6
1980-1987	1	7
1991-1996	1	8
Correspondence		
1957	1	9
1964-1968	1	10
1970-1979	1	11
1980-1984	1	12
1985-1989	1	13
1990-1994	1	14
1995-1999	2	1
2000-2001	2	2
Undated	2	3
Officer Rosters		
1949-1949	2	4
1950-1959	2	5
1962-1964	2	6
1971-1978	2	7
1980-1989	2	8
1990-1997	2	9
Past Presidents		
1920-1997	2	10
Meeting Minutes and Agendas		

## Annual Reports

1920	2	11
1950-1959	2	12
1960-1964	2	13
1965-1969	2	14
1970-1974	2	15
1975-1979	2	16
1980-1984	3	1
1985-1989	3	2
1990-1992	3	3
1993-1995	3	4
1996-1999	3	5
2000-2002	3	6

## Executive Minutes

1946-1949	4	1
1950	4	2
1951	4	3
1952	4	4
1953	4	5
1954	4	6
1955	4	7
1956	4	8
1957	4	9
1958	4	10
1959	4	11
1960	4	12
1961	4	13
1962	4	14
1963	4	15
1964	4	16
1965	5	1
1966	5	2
1967	5	3
1968	5	4
1969	5	5
1970	5	6
1971	5	7
1972	5	8
1973	5	9
1974	5	10

1975	5	11
1976	5	12
1977	5	13
1978	5	14
1979	5	15
1980	5	16
1981	5	17
1982	6	1
1983	6	2
1984	6	3
1985	6	4
1986	6	5
1987	6	6
1988	6	7
1989	6	8
1990	6	9
1991	6	10
1992	6	11
1993	7	1
1994	7	2
1995	7	3
1996	7	4
1997	7	5
1998	7	6
1999	7	7
2000	7	8
2001	7	9
Executive and General Minutes		
1947-1950	7	10
General Meeting Minutes		
1952-1954	7	11
1955-1959	7	12
1960-1965	7	13
1976, 1978	7	14
1981-1987	7	15
1993-1994	7	16
Special Meeting, Bicentennial Jefferson Meeting		
1988	7	17
Unit Minutes		
General		

Undated	8	1
1969-1974	8	2
1975-1979	8	3
1991	8	4
Membership		
Correspondence		
1947	8	5
1986-1989	8	6
New Member Information		
1957-1997	8	7
New Member Luncheons		
1980-1986	8	8
Rosters		
1924	8	9
1948-1949	8	10
1950-1954	8	11
1955-1959	8	12
1960-1968	8	13
1972-1979	8	14
1980-1984	8	15
1985-1989	8	16
1990-1999	9	1
2000	9	2
Undated	9	3
Annual Membership Count		
1986-1987	9	4
Policies and Procedures		
Bylaws		
1957-1992	9	5
Mission Statements		
1993	9	6
Policies		
1971-1998	9	7
Stationery and Logos		
Undated	9	8
Anniversaries, 1968-2000		
50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary		
1968-1969	9	9
75 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary		
Budgets		

1994	9	10
Contributors and Sponsors		
1994-1995	9	11
Correspondence		
1994-1995	9	12
Honorary Committee		
1994	9	13
Invitations and Programs		
1995	9	14
Planning		
1994-1995	9	15
Proclamations		
1995	9	16
Program Scripts		
1995	9	17
76 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary		
1996	9	18
77 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary		
1997	9	19
80 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary		
Contributors and Sponsors		
1999-2000	10	1
Honorary Committee		
1999-2000	10	2
Honoree Biographies		
2000	10	3
Invitations and Programs		
2000	10	4
Invitee Lists		
1999	10	5
Planning		
2000	10	6
Press Packet		
2000	10	7
Proclamations		
2000	10	8
Scripts		
2000	10	9
Speakers		
2000	10	10

## Charlotte Women's Political Caucus, 1969-1999

Articles		
1981-1989	10	11
Bylaws		
1972, 1974	10	12
Committee Reports		
1974-1983	10	13
Correspondence		
1977-1979	10	14
1980-1984	10	15
Education		
1983	10	16
Elections		
1969, 1981-1982	10	17
Financials		
Fundraisers		
1987, 1993	11	1
Statements		
1999	11	2
Goals		
1980	11	3
Histories		
1976-1977	11	4
Issues		
1983	11	5
Membership		
General		
1983, 1995	11	6
Rosters		
1972-1987	11	7
Meetings		
1972-1973, 1978	11	8
1982-1984	11	9
Programs		
1982	11	10
Publications		
Brochures		
Undated	11	11
Flyers		
1977, 1982	11	12

Newsletters		
1974, 1977	11	13
1981-1984	11	14
Other		
<i>"By Her Own Bootstraps: A Saga of Women in North Carolina, a Bicentennial Tribute,"</i> by Albert Coates, 1975	11	15
<i>"North Carolina Women's Agenda,"</i> 1991-1992	11	16
Speeches		
1992	11	17
Committees, 1950-2000		
Education Committee		
Correspondence		
1965	11	18
1970	11	19
1986-1989	11	20
1990-1994	11	21
Undated	11	22
Elections		
1993-1994	11	23
Forums		
Undated	11	24
General Information		
1965	11	25
Membership Rosters		
1989-1990	11	26
Meeting Minutes and Agendas		
1990-1995	11	27
Notes		
Undated	11	28
Programs		
1990-1991	11	29
Projects		
Early Childhood Development		
1987	11	30
School Bond Issue		
1961	12	1
Teacher Development		
1988	12	2

Publications		
1992	12	3
Questions for School Board		
1992	12	4
Reports		
1971	12	5
1988	12	6
1990-1994	12	7
Speeches		
1991-1993	12	8
Studies		
1950-1970	12	9
Workshops		
1962	12	10
Naturalization Committee		
Programs		
1963, 1979-1982	12	11
Nominating Committee		
Reports		
1966-1990	12	12
Woman of the Year		
General		
1967	12	13
Nominations		
1966	12	14
1970-1974	12	15
1975-1979	12	16
1980, 1984	12	17
Observer Corps		
General		
1983, undated	12	18
Correspondence		
1966-1970, 1983	12	19
Meetings		
1970-1971	12	20
Reports		
1970-1971, 1986-1990	12	21
Voter Service		
General		
1950-1991	12	22

Citizen Education Fund		
Financials		
1997-2000	12	23
Project Requests and Reports		
1996	12	24
Congressional Interviews		
Guidelines		
1974, 1978	13	1
Reports		
1975-1983	13	2
Correspondence		
1950-1952, 1996	13	3
Grants		
Security Debate		
1986, 1988	13	4
Voter Education		
1986-1992	13	5
Meetings		
1973	13	6
Notes		
Undated	13	7
Reports		
1951-1952	13	8
1967	13	9
1972-1977	13	10
1980-1981	13	11
Special Projects, Jefferson Meeting		
1988	13	12
Voter Statistics		
1999	13	13
Financials, 1950-2001		
General		
1981, undated	13	14
Bank Statements		
1989-1991	13	15
Cancelled Checks		
1989-1991	13	16
Check Registers		
1982-1990	13	17
Deposit Slips		

1986-1991	13	18
Postal Service Statements		
1990-1992	13	19
Receipts		
1981-1999	13	20
Budgets		
1957-1958	14	1
1963-1964, 1968-1969	14	2
1970-1979	14	3
1980-1989	14	4
1990-1999	14	5
2000-2001	14	6
Finance Drive		
1963-1969	14	7
1970	14	8
1972	14	9
1973	14	10
1974-1975	14	11
1976-1977	14	12
1981-1982	14	13
1983	14	14
1985	14	15
1986	14	16
1987	14	17
1988	14	18
1989	14	19
1990	15	1
1991	15	2
1992	15	3
1993	15	4
1994	15	5
1995	15	6
1996	15	7
1999	15	8
Prospective Contributors		
Undated	15	9
Finance Reports		
1950-1951	15	10
1988	15	11
Fund Raising		

Example Letters		
Undated	15	12
Suggestions		
1980-1987	15	13
Voter Guide Campaign		
1989-1990	15	14
Grants		
Education Fund		
1987-1988	16	1
Science and Technology		
1982-1984	16	2
Toxic Substances		
1980-1982	16	3
Ledgers		
1974-1975, 1981, 1991	61	
1984-1989	16	4
1990-1992	16	5
Monthly Treasurer's Reports		
1966-1969	16	6
1970-1974	16	7
1975-1979	16	8
1980-1984	16	9
1985-1989	16	10
1990	16	11
1991	16	12
1992	16	13
1993	16	14
1994	17	1
1995	17	2
1996	17	3
1997	17	4
1998	17	5
1999	17	6
2000	17	7
2001	17	8
Treasurer's Reports, other		
1974-1981	17	9
Histories, 1920-2004		
Early Documents		
1920-1947	17	10

Histories		
1924-2000	17	11
Proclamations		
1982, 1988	17	12
Publications about the League of Women Voters		
1986-2000	17	13
Thesis, <i>The League of Women Voters in Charlotte, North Carolina—Its Impact on Local Politics</i> , by Patricia K. DeLaney, 1957	17	14
Video Information, <i>The Tensions of Their Times</i> , 2000-2004	17	15
Publications, 1950-2001		
Booklets		
1950	18	1
1964-1965	18	2
1965	18	3
1972, 1978	18	4
1986-1987	18	5
Brochures		
1961-1964	18	6
1972-1978	18	7
1980-1989	18	8
1994, 1997	18	9
2001	18	10
Undated	18	11
Flyers		
1950, 1952	18	12
1964	18	13
1974	18	14
1985, 1988	18	15
1996	18	16
2000-2001	18	17
Undated	18	18
Newsletters		
<i>Voter</i>		
1947	18	19
1948	18	20
1949	18	21
1950	18	22
1951	18	23

1952	18	24
1953	18	25
1954	18	26
1955	19	1
1956	19	2
1957	19	3
1958	19	4
1959	19	5
1960	19	6
1961	19	7
1962	19	8
1963	19	9
1964	19	10
1965	19	11
1966	19	12
1967	19	13
1968	19	14
1969	19	15
1970	19	16
1971	19	17
1972	19	18
1973	19	19
1974	20	1
1975	20	2
1976	20	3
1977	20	4
1978	20	5
1979	20	6
1980	20	7
1981	20	8
1982	20	9
1983	20	10
1984	20	11
1985	20	12
1986	21	1
1987	21	2
1988	21	3
1989	21	4
1990	21	5
1991	21	6

1992	21	7
1993	21	8
1994	22	1
1995	22	2
1996	22	3
1997	22	4
1998	22	5
1999	22	6
2000	22	7
2001	22	8
<i>Voter Guides</i>		
1976-1979	22	9
1980-1984	22	10
1985-1989	22	11
1990-1994	22	12
1995-1996	23	1
Other		
City of Charlotte, North Carolina, 1955	23	2
<i>Ebony</i> Article, 1966	23	3
Magazines and Articles, Various		
1972, 1976	23	4
1981-1987	23	5
1990-1999	23	6
2000	23	7
Songs		
Undated	23	8
Public Relations, 1973-2001		
Metrolina Viewpoints		
1979	23	9
1980-1984	23	10
Undated	23	11
Press Releases		
1977, 1979	23	12
1980-1981	23	13
1998	23	14
2000	23	15
Public Service Announcements		
1986, 1988	23	16
2001	23	17
Undated	23	18

Speeches		
1973-1979	23	19
1980-1984	23	20
1986-1989	23	21
1993-1994	23	22
2000	23	23
Undated	23	24
TV/ Radio/Newspaper Spots		
1977	23	25
1981-1982, 1986	23	26
1990, 1995	23	27
2000	23	28
Voter Service, 1925-2003		
Civics 101		
Agendas		
1997-1999	24	1
2000-2001	24	2
Alumni		
2000-2001	24	3
Certificates		
1998-1999	24	4
Class Folders		
2000	24	5
2002	24	6
2003	24	7
Commencement Programs		
1997-1998, 2001-2002	24	8
Planning		
1996-1998	24	9
2000-2001	24	10
Elections		
1961	24	11
1965	24	12
1972	24	13
1973	24	14
1974	24	15
1975	24	16
1976	24	17
1977	24	18
1978	24	19

1980		24	20
1981		24	21
1982		24	22
1983		24	23
1984		24	24
1985		24	25
1986			
	1	25	1
	2	25	2
1987		25	3
1988		25	4
1989		25	5
1990		25	6
1991		25	7
1992		25	8
1993		25	9
1994		25	10
1995		26	1
1996		26	2
1997			
	1	26	3
	2	26	4
1998			
	1	26	5
	2	26	6
1999		27	1
2000			
	1	27	2
	2	27	3
2001		27	4
2002		27	5
Undated		27	6
League Action and Advocacy			
Issues and Study Topics			
List of Local Agenda Items			
1947-1992		27	7
Affirmative Action			
1976		27	8
1977		27	9
1978		27	10

1981	27	11
1995	27	12
Arena Referendum		
1997	27	13
1998	27	14
1999	27	15
2000	28	1
2001	28	2
Undated	28	3
Child Day Care		
1979	28	4
1981	28	5
1982	28	6
1983	28	7
1984	28	8
1991	28	9
Undated	28	10
City/County Development		
1959	28	11
1960	28	12
1968	28	13
1969	28	14
1970	28	15
1971	28	16
1973	28	17
1974	28	18
1977	28	19
1981	28	20
1982	28	21
1988	28	22
1990	28	23
1991	28	24
1992	28	25
1994	28	26
1995	28	27
1996	28	28
1998	29	1
2001	29	2
Undated	29	3
County Manager System		

1959	29	4
1960	29	5
1961	29	6
Undated	29	7
Court Watch		
1993	29	8
1994	29	9
1996	29	10
1997	29	11
1998	29	12
1999	29	13
2000		
1	29	14
2	29	15
Undated	29	16
Domestic Violence		
1979	29	17
Education, Dean McKinney		
1919-1950	29	18
Education		
1951	29	19
1952	30	1
1954	30	2
1955	30	3
1956	30	4
1957	30	5
1958	30	6
1959	30	7
1960	30	8
1961	30	9
1962	30	10
1963	30	11
1964	30	12
1965	30	13
1966	30	14
1967	30	15
1968	30	16
1969	30	17
1970		
1	30	18

2	30	19
3	31	1
HEW Conference	31	2
1971		
1	31	3
2	31	4
3	31	5
1972	31	6
1973	31	7
1974	31	8
1975	32	1
1976	32	2
1977	32	3
1978	32	4
1979	32	5
1980	32	6
1981	32	7
1982	32	8
1983	32	9
1984	32	10
1986	32	11
1987	32	12
1988	32	13
1989	32	14
1990	32	15
1991	32	16
1992	32	17
1993	32	18
1994	33	1
1995	33	2
1996	33	3
1997	33	4
1998	33	5
1999	33	6
2000	33	7
2001	33	8
Undated		
1	34	1
2	34	2
Environment		

1970	34	3
1971	34	4
1972	34	5
1973	34	6
1975	34	7
1980	34	8
1987	34	9
1991	34	10
1992	34	11
1993	34	12
Undated	34	13
Equal Rights Amendment		
1970	34	14
1974	34	15
1977	34	16
1978	34	17
1979	34	18
1982	34	19
1983	34	20
1984	34	21
1988	34	22
1989	34	23
Undated	34	24
Extension Applications		
Albemarle Highway		
1937	34	25
1937	34	26
1938	34	27
Avenue A off Beatty Ford Road		
1937	34	28
1939	34	29
Beatty Ford Road—Hopewell Church Community		
1938	34	30
Beatty Ford Road off near Fesperman		
1937	34	31
Beatty Ford Road, Northern Mecklenburg County		
1938	34	32

Belfonte Community--Harrisburg 1937	35	1
Belmont—Wilkinson Boulevard at End of Line 1937	35	2
Cabins North of Buster Boyd Bridge on South Carolina Side of River— York Branch (Clover) 1937	35	3
Catawba River to Rectifier 1940	35	4
Central Avenue Undated	35	5
Charlotte Kannapolis Road Number 130 from Statesville Road 1937	35	6
Charlotte Observer Building, South Tryon Street 1946	35	7
Clear Creek Section Next to Estridge Estates 1940	35	8
Commonwealth Avenue to Oakhurst Heights 1938	35	9
Daniel Street and Stratford Avenue—Street Light 1942	35	10
Derita 1937	35	11
1939	35	12
Earle Price Old Salisbury Road (Orr Place) 1937	35	13
East of Jackson School 1940	35	14
219 East Trade Street—Change Service from 2 to 3 Wire 1942	35	15
Estimates, City Limits		

1925-1935	35	16
Fort Mill		
1939	35	17
Georgeville Section North of Albemarle Highway East of 151		
1939	35	18
Graham Heights		
1942	35	19
Hagers Gin off Denver Line		
1937	35	20
Hancock, South Carolina—S.A.L. Pumping Station		
1938	35	21
Harrisburg Beyond Terril Extension Property, Rocky River Church Section		
1939-1940	35	22
Hemphill Street to N.H. Carr		
Undated	35	23
Hempstead and Cherokee Place New Street Light		
1941	35	24
Installing Load Break Disconnects on Wilkinson Boulevard, Stonewall Street, and Remount Road		
1956	36	1
J.C. Erwin Extension off Caldwell Road		
1956	36	2
Lancaster-Pineville Highway this Side of Owenby		
1940	36	3
Lawyers Road at McMannus Store		
1938	36	4
1812 Lyndhurst Avenue—Power Service		
1941	36	5
Mallard Creek Section Near Garrison		
1940	36	6

Mineral Springs		
1938	36	7
Morris Field		
1946	36	8
Mount Holly-Huntersville Road Off Beatty Ford Road to W.G. Craven and L.J. Stillwell		
1934	36	9
Near H.M Dulin—Beyond Hickory Grove		
1939	36	10
Newell-Hickory Grove Road Near Newell to Canup		
1942	36	11
New Hope		
1939	36	12
New Hope Prospect Line to Tom Doster		
1940	36	13
New Pineville Road		
1940	36	14
North of Flowes Store		
1940	36	15
Oakview Terrace off Mount Holly Road		
1941	36	16
Off 151 Beyond Clontz-Purser Extension		
1940	36	17
Off Dixie Road Southwest of Browhill Store		
1941	36	18
Off Hemphill Heights Road		
1940	36	19
Off Mallard Creek Road—Across Creek from R.H. Cooper		
1937	36	20
Off Mint Hill Matthews Road		
1940	36	21

Off Moore's Chapel Line Near Dabb's Place		
1937	36	22
Off Plank Road		
1940	36	23
Off Providence Road-Near Dick Booth Place		
1938	36	24
Off Providence Road at Grier's Store		
1940	36	25
Off Remount Road		
1937	36	26
Undated	36	27
Old Salisbury Road to Fred Cochrane Ten Houses		
1941	36	28
Old Sardis Road to Rock House		
1940	36	29
Park Road		
1937	36	30
Pineville Road		
1937	36	31
1938	36	32
Pioneer Mill Road—Off Albemarle Road Across Field from Lem Biggers		
1937	36	33
Providence Road to Murkland Church and School on Old Road		
1941	36	34
Providence Section—Lancaster Highway Near S.E. Kerr		
1941	36	35
Rocky River Road—Harrisburg, North Carolina Church and Pastor's Home		
1937	36	36
Rocky River		
1942	36	37

Rough Edge and Prospect School— Monroe Lancaster Highway 1937	36	38
2920 Rozzells Ferry Road 1946	36	39
Secret Short Cut South of Matthews Mint Hill Road at Mosers Store 1937	36	40
Sharon View Road—Loyd Summerville Property 1937	36	41
Shopton Road-Beyond Sam Knox 1938	36	42
Shopton Road—Vic Shaws Tenant House 1938	37	1
Small Extensions 1937	37	2
Southwest of Pineville 1939	37	3
Statesville Road—7 ½ miles out 1937	37	4
Steele Creek Road 1940	37	5
Street Light Orders 1940-1945	37	6
Three Phase Extension to Irwin Creek and S.A.L. Railway Undated	37	7
Toddville, North Carolina 1943	37	8
Tuckaseegee Road 1937	37	9
Tuckaseegee Road—6 miles out— Ten House 1938	37	10
Tuckaseegee Road 1 mile beyond Church on Left 1940	37	11

Waxhaw Road South of Matthews— O.L. Privette		
1937	37	12
Waxhaw—Towards Howie Mine		
1938	37	13
Wesley Chapel—Monroe Road— Relocating Lines Union County Near County Home		
1940	37	14
West of Croft on Road #166		
1940	37	15
Wilmington Road—Three Phase Extension to Concrete Pipe Plant— Convict Camp		
1940	37	16
Wilmington Road Beyond Old Crusher Plant		
1940	37	17
Healthcare		
1988	37	18
1990	37	19
1991	37	20
1992	37	21
1993	37	22
1994	37	23
1996	38	1
1997	38	2
1998		
1	38	3
2	38	4
1999	38	5
2000	38	6
2001	38	7
Undated	38	8
Housing		
1962	38	9
1969	38	10
1988	38	11
1989	38	12
1995	38	13

1998	39	1
1999	39	2
2000	39	3
Undated	39	4
National Missile Defense		
1979	39	5
2000	39	6
Natural Resources		
1969	39	7
1981	39	8
1982	39	9
1985	39	10
1986	39	11
1987	39	12
1989	39	13
1990	39	14
1991	39	15
1992	39	16
1993	39	17
1995	39	18
1996	39	19
1997	39	20
Undated	39	21
National Security		
1976	39	22
1984	39	23
1985	39	24
1987	39	25
1988	39	26
Political Education		
1974	39	27
1976	39	28
1978	39	29
1979	40	1
1986	40	2
1996	40	3
1997	40	4
Undated	40	5
Racism		
1993	40	6

1997	40	7
Undated	40	8
Reproductive Rights		
1976	40	9
1977	40	10
1978	40	11
1979	40	12
1982	40	13
1983	40	14
1989	40	15
1991	40	16
Undated	40	17
Smoke Abatement		
1954	40	18
1955	40	19
1956	40	20
1959	40	21
Undated	40	22
Taxes		
Commuter/Property		
1971	40	23
1974	40	24
1977	40	25
1978	40	26
1979	40	27
1980	40	28
1983	40	29
1985	40	30
1986	40	31
1987	40	32
1988	41	1
1989	41	2
1990	41	3
1991	41	4
1992	41	5
Undated	41	6
Food		
1982	41	7
1990	41	8
1991	41	9

1994	41	10
1995	41	11
1996		
1	41	12
2	41	13
1997		
1	41	14
2	42	1
1998	42	2
1999	42	3
2000	42	4
2003	42	5
Undated	42	6
Toxic Waste		
1980	42	7
1985	42	8
1986	42	9
1987	42	10
1988	42	11
Undated	42	12
Transportation		
1973	42	13
1974	42	14
1978	42	15
1981	42	16
1993	42	17
1994	42	18
Undated	42	19
Voter Protections		
1968	42	20
1981	43	1
1982	43	2
1987	43	3
1988	43	4
1989	43	5
1991	43	6
1992	43	7
1993	43	8
1994	43	9
1995	43	10

2000	43	11
Undated	43	12
Welfare		
1975	43	13
1977	43	14
1978	43	15
1979	43	16
1980	43	17
1981	43	18
1982	43	19
1984	43	20
1987	43	21
1989	43	22
1990	43	23
1991	43	24
1992	43	25
1993	43	26
Undated	43	27
Women's Issues		
1961	43	28
1976	43	29
1979	43	30
1983	43	31
1989	43	32
2000	43	33
Undated	43	34
Zoning		
1969	43	35
1985	43	36
1986	43	37
1987	44	1
1988	44	2
1989	44	3
1990	44	4
1991	44	5
1993	44	6
Undated	44	7
Local Studies Agendas		
General Lists		
1947-1992	44	8

Agendas by Year		
1951-1953, 1957-1960	44	9
1960-1966	44	10
1977-1979	44	11
1980-1983, 1986-1989	44	12
1995-1997	44	13
Positions		
Consensus		
General		
1988, undated	44	14
Multiple		
1959-1972	44	15
City/County Consolidation		
1969	44	16
Criminal Justice		
1976	44	17
District Representation		
1977	44	18
Education		
1969, 1988-1993, 2000, undated	44	19
Environmental Quality		
1973	44	20
Healthcare		
1992	44	21
Housing		
Undated	44	22
Taxes		
1980, 1989, undated	44	23
Urban Crisis		
1978	44	24
Victims Compensation		
1982	44	25
Positions and Statements		
General		
1970, 1982	44	26
Multiple		
1959-1990	44	27
City Planning		
1969, 1986	44	28

Education		
1957-1990, undated	44	29
Elections		
1961, 1973	44	30
Housing		
2001	44	31
Land Use		
1971, 1991	44	32
Reproductive Choice		
1982	44	33
Taxes		
1979-1995	44	34
Zoning		
1981	45	1
Special Projects		
Democracy.net		
2000	45	2
Education Futures Commission		
2000-2001	45	3
Pathways for Action		
1997	45	4
Women's Vote Project		
1983-1984	45	5
Women Elected to Office, 1920-1995		
General		
<i>Profile of Women Holding Office</i> , by Marilyn Johnson and Kathy Stanwick, 1976	45	6
Women Elected Officials		
1920-1995	45	7
<i>Women of the North Carolina General Assembly</i> , by Carol Hammerstein, 1995	45	8
Charlotte/Mecklenburg		
Alexander, Julia		
1957	45	9
Avinger, Jane Jackson		
Undated	45	10
Baucom, Vicky		
Undated	45	11
Bennett, Betsy		
1990s	45	12

Bissell, Marilyn R. 1995	45	13
Brennan, Louise Smith Undated	45	14
Cadieu, Juanita I. 1994	45	15
Cantrell, Daphene L. 1994	45	16
Chirico, Edna 1994	45	17
Craven, Jennie Erwin Undated	45	18
Curran, Martha H. 1990s	45	19
Earle, Beverly Miller 1990s	45	20
Easterling, Ruth M. Undated	45	21
Foster, Jo Graham Undated	45	22
Frech, Laura Undated	45	23
Fulton, Shirley L. Undated	45	24
Gibson, Judith A. 1995	45	25
Hager, Shirley G. Undated	45	26
Hair, Elizabeth G. 1994	45	27
Hunter, Madeline Faires 1934-1936	45	28
Jones, Julia Virginia 1990s	45	29
Kelly, Elizabeth MacLeod Undated	45	30
Kinsey, Patsy B. 1990s	45	31
Lockwood, Barbara Undated	45	32

MacCormac, Nancy H.		
1990s	45	33
Mathis, Carolyn Williamson		
1981	45	34
Maulden, Julia		
1994	45	35
McIntyre, Jane London		
1990s	45	36
McLean Carrie		
1969	45	37
Patterson, Pamella G.		
1990s	45	38
Phillips, Kim		
1990s	45	39
Ridle, Pat Lowe (Ousley)		
1990s	45	40
Schrader, Ann		
1993	45	41
Stevenson, Sarah Mingo		
Undated	45	42
Thomas, Ann Davis		
1994-1995	45	43
Tillett, Gladys Avery		
1987, 1994-1995	46	1
Trosch, Minette		
Undated	46	2
Wheeler, Lynn		
Undated	46	3
Williamson, Pat Locke		
1995	46	4
Woollen, Velva W.		
1994	46	5
<b>State (North Carolina), 1969-1998</b>		
Administrative		
Annual Conventions		
1969	46	6
1977	46	7
1979	46	8
1980	46	9
1981	46	10

1982	46	11
1983	46	12
1984	46	13
1985	46	14
1989	46	15
Policies		
1983-1984	46	16
Financials		
Education Fund		
1989-1990	46	17
League Action and Advocacy		
Issues and Special Topics		
General		
1991-1993	46	18
Education		
1982-1983	46	19
Equal Rights Amendment		
1975	46	20
1976	46	21
1977	46	22
1978	46	23
1981	46	24
1982	46	25
Undated	46	26
Reproductive Choice		
1981-1982	46	27
Welfare		
1976	46	28
1978	46	29
Undated	46	30
Positions and Statements		
Criminal Justice		
1976, 1980	46	31
Education		
1989, undated	46	32
Employment		
1983	46	33
National Security		
1984	46	34
North Carolina Women's Political Caucus		

Administrative		
Bylaws		
1975-1979	46	35
Correspondence		
1976-1979	47	1
Conventions		
1977	47	2
1978	47	3
Publications		
Newsletters		
1976-1989	47	4
Publications		
Booklets		
1983-1986	47	5
Books		
1975, 1983	47	6
Brochures		
1979	47	7
Newsletters		
<i>NC Voter</i>		
1983-1987	47	8
1991-1998	47	9
<b>National, 1965-1992</b>		
Administrative		
Conventions		
1992	47	10
League Action and Advocacy		
Issues and Special Topics		
Campaign Finance Reform		
1973	47	11
Clean Air		
1982-1983	47	12
Clean Water		
Undated	47	13
Electoral College		
1967	47	14
1968	47	15
1969	47	16
Undated	47	17
Equal Rights		

1972	47	18
1976	47	19
1981	47	20
Undated	47	21
Home Rule (DC)		
1965	47	22
Reproductive Choice		
1982	47	23
Undated	47	24
Water Resources		
1969	47	25
1970	47	26
Welfare		
1975	47	27
1976	47	28
1978	47	29
1982	47	30
Positions		
Arms Control		
Undated	48	1
Reproductive Choice		
1982-1983	48	2
National Women's Political Caucus		
Administrative		
Conventions		
1977	48	3
1983	48	4
Correspondence		
1978-1982	48	5
Policies		
1977-1978	48	6
Publications		
Newsletters		
1977-1979	48	7
Publications		
Booklets		
1954-1988	48	8
Brochures		
1974-1984	48	9
Newsletters		

General		
1956-1981	48	10
<b>Clippings</b>		
Campaign Reform	49	1
Caucus	49	2
City/County Development	49	3
Civics 101	49	4
Court watch Project	49	5
Credit Banking	49	6
Daycare	49	7
Elections	49	8
Employment	49	9
Environmental Quality	49	10
Equal Rights Amendment		
1	49	11
2	49	12
3	49	13
Workgroups and Programs	49	14
Family/Marriage/Divorce	50	1
Food Tax		
1	50	2
2	50	3
Garbage/Recycling	50	4
Guns	50	5
Healthcare	50	6
Housing	50	7
League of Women Voters History		
1	50	8
2	50	9
Legal Rights	50	10
National Electoral College	50	11
National Organization of Women	50	12
Natural Resources	50	13
Non-Partisan Elections	50	14
Opinions/Editorials	50	15
Politics	51	1
Race	51	2
Reproductive Rights	51	3
School Board	51	4
Schools		

1	51	5
2	51	6
3	51	7
4	51	8
5	51	9
6	52	1
7	52	2
8	52	3
9	52	4
10	52	5
11	52	6
12	52	7
Sports	53	1
State Legislature	53	2
Taxes	53	3
Teacher Work Conditions	53	4
Transportation	53	5
Uptown Arena	53	6
Voting	53	7
Welfare	53	8
Zoning	53	9
<b>Photographs, 1966-2000</b>		
Anniversaries		
75 <sup>th</sup> , 1995	54	1
80 <sup>th</sup> , 2000	54	2
Civics 101, 1997	54	3
Community Dialogues Panel, undated	54	4
Conventions		
National, 1998	54	5
State, 1997	54	6
Distinguished Women of North Carolina Awards Banquet, 1996	54	7
Exhibit photos, undated	67- 68	
Food Tax, undated	54	8
Food Tax Press Conference, 1996	54	9
Identified People, undated	54	10
Levine Museum of the New South Event, 2000	54	11
Meetings		
Annual, 1989	54	12

Unit, 1991	54	13
Presidents and Honored Women, undated	54	14
Social Volunteerism Symposium, 1973	54	15
Unidentified		
1, undated	54	16
2, undated	54	17
Voter Service, 1966	54	18
Women's Equality Day Parade, undated	54	19
<b>Negatives</b>		
Negatives, undated	54	20
<b>Slides, 1988</b>		
Voter Registration, 1988	54	21
<b>Audio/Visual, 1984-2000</b>		
Cassettes		
Betty Seizinger, WDAV Interview 30 minutes; WFAE	55	
Interview 10 minutes, 2 February 1995		
League of Women Voters PSA's "Register and Vote"	55	
"Debates '86"		
WFAE Story on African-American Women Voters, 1	55	
March 2000		
Diskettes		
80 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary (4 discs)	55	
Charlotte Mecklenburg School/Education Committee	55	
Work, 1990s-2000s (20 discs)		
VHS		
Anniversaries		
80 <sup>th</sup> , 1999-2000 (9 tapes)	55	
Election Debates (28 tapes)		
1986-1989	56	
1997-1998	56	
2000	57	
Undated	57	
Other		
Broadcast, 1990	57	
Debates '88 Production Elements, 1988	58	
Felicia Rashad, Candice Bergen, undated	58	
The Ford Foundation "The Common Good,"	58	
1990		
Gala, 1996	59	

League of Women Voters Training Teleconference, 1989	59
The Third World Challenge to U.S. Policy, 1985 (2 copies)	59
Unidentified, 1989	59
Union of Concerned Scientists "The False Frontier," 1986	59
Voter Registration PSA, 1984	59
WBTV, undated	59
<b>Oversize</b>	
Drawings, certificates, framed pieces	60
<b>Artifacts</b>	
Buttons, ERA stamps, gavels, voting sign	64
Plaques	62
Silver bowls (2)	63
Voting machine demonstrator	65
<b>Scrapbooks</b>	
Scrapbooks (22)	66