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For Immediate Release:

Library Program Showcases Women’s Suffrage in NC

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NEWTON – As the Catawba County Library partners with local organizations to mark the centennial of women’s suffrage in the United States, it’s offering programs to tell the story and invite the community’s participation.

On Wednesday, October 14, at 6 pm, the library will host a live Zoom seminar called *You Have to Start a Thing*, which highlights the struggles and successes of the suffrage movement in North Carolina at the turn of the 20th century. Receive the Zoom invitation by emailing share@catawbacountync.gov.

RaeLana Poteat, curator of political and social history at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, will present the talk, which is based on an exhibit featuring men and women involved in both sides of the fight for voting equality. The exhibit also documents the role women of color played in the movement and looks at the gradual acceptance of women into positions of political power.

The exhibit is notable for its focus on events in North Carolina, which differed from the national movement. It also provides photographic glimpses of the people who were involved and shares speeches, letters, articles, and propaganda from the period. The name of the exhibit comes from a comment by legislator Lillian Exum Clement, who said in 1921, “I want to blaze a trail for other women. I know that years from now there will be many other women in politics, but you have to start a thing.”

Catawba County’s suffrage centennial events will continue into 2021 and will include a series of presentations that put the movement into a local context. The project is supported by a grant from the United Arts Council of Catawba County. Partner organizations include the Hickory Museum of Art, Catawba Valley Community College, the Hickory Public Library, the Historical Association of Catawba County, and the League of Women Voters of Catawba County.

To view a series of historical panels documenting the suffrage movement, please visit <https://catawbacountync.gov/county-services/library/suffrage-centennial/>.

To learn more about the Catawba County Library System, visit www.catawbacountync.gov/library, call 828.465.8664, email mylibrary@catawbacountync.gov, or visit www.facebook.com/catawbacountylibrarysystem.

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About: *The Catawba County Library is our community's place to connect, explore, and grow. We empower lives and build our community by bringing people, information, and ideas together. The library, headquartered in Newton, serves the community with seven locations throughout the county and is a year-round, integral provider of early literacy and lifelong learning resources and programming. The library also provides a full complement of computer and digital services, classes, and support to bridge the digital divide, empower job seekers, and enhance community quality of life and economic health.*



catawba county
library system