



League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area

LEAGUE LINES

Post Office Box 12541 Columbia, SC 29211 (803) 665-1768

www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Editor: Suzanne Rhodes / Co-Editor: Pat Manley


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August 2014



Calendar AUGUST

M 4 5:30 – 7:30 LWVCA Board Meeting
Richland Library – Cooper Branch 5317 N. Trenholm Rd.

Th 21  LWV of the Columbia Area August Member & Guest Social. See Details 

SEPTEMBER

Th 18 Public Policy Luncheon (Details on [Page 4](#))



LWVCA ANNUAL SOCIAL FOR MEMBERS AND GUESTS
Woodhill Estates Clubhouse
Thursday, August 21 - 6 PM

“Chill” after a **SIZZLING SUMMER** and gear up for a **FANTASTIC FALL**, with great appetizers, desserts & beverages ... Please bring appetizer or dessert to share.



Directions:

From Town:

Go out Garner’s Ferry Rd. & turn RIGHT at Eric’s San Jose restaurant (just past Woodhill Mall on right) onto Pelham Dr.

From I-77:

Take Exit 9 toward Columbia; then go to Garner’s Ferry Road toward Woodhill Mall (on left). Turn LEFT onto Pelham Drive in front of Eric’s San Jose. Arborwood is on right.

WHAT’S INSIDE?



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Look for balloons  and directional signs  to the Clubhouse!

!!Please email your RSVP to Susan James at susanbjames@sc.rr.com no later than Tuesday, August 19.!!



I was asked to print the report I presented at the Annual Meeting on May 15 on the “State of the LWV of the Columbia Area” for the first issue of *League Lines* for the 2014 – 2015 fiscal year:

“As president finishing my first year of a 2 year term, I am honored to report to our members the many accomplishments we achieved this past year. We took on a number of challenges and sponsored programs that enhanced the Columbia area’s understanding of voting procedures and critical public policy issues. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Board for their support as we carried out our work. The year started in mid-July with a board retreat where we discussed and identified our goals and action items for the fiscal year. In reviewing that list, I am pleased to report that we not only accomplished most of those stated goals, but were also able to conduct or participate in a few additional activities that were not anticipated at the time of the July board retreat.

Some of the more significant and visible activities included:

- 1) conducting two public information forums and a consensus meeting on the proposed change in city government;**
- 2) preparing an easy-to-read brochure on the “Facts and FAQs on the Forms of City Government” – almost 2,000 copies were distributed to the public;**
- 3) preparing and conducting a presentation on the history of the Women’s Suffrage movement to the 10th grade U.S. History classes at Fairfield High School;**
- 4) setting up a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter;**
- 5) conducting voter registration drives at 11 area high schools as part of a statewide youth voter registration initiative;**
- 6) conducting an Agriculture Update consensus meeting;**
- 7) conducting 7 Public Policy Luncheons featuring expert speakers on topics ranging from 3rd grade reading, out-of-state waste disposal, sustainable farming, and sensible gun controls;**
- 8) public support of the successful passage of a RCPL capital investment referendum;**
- 9) co-sponsorship of a panel discussion with the Delta Sigma Theta sorority on the change in form of city government;**
- 10) sponsorship of a “Road Trip” with COMET representatives;**
- 11) partnering with the Columbia Municipal Election Commission to conduct 8 voter education sessions;**
- 12) writing a guest editorial on effective city government; and**
- 13) forming a new Outreach Committee, with renewed focus on enhancing our Local League’s visibility in the community.**

Let’s pause and take a second to give ourselves a “pat on the back” with applause to celebrate our accomplishments.

Notwithstanding the past good work, we continue to face challenges, and much work needs to be done. Although we have approximately 108 members, our numbers have held fairly steady in recent years –

from a low of 98 in 2011 to a high of 115 in 2013. I ask every member to make it part of their “psyche” to invite a new member, engage a current member, and/or expand your own participation. The strength and active participation of our members will be very important as we head into mid-term elections. Our visibility as an organization will be “front-and-center” as we initiate or receive requests to conduct or co-sponsor various voter services activities, including voter registration education sessions and candidate forums. How much we can accomplish is a direct function of the strength of our membership – as it is our members, with their financial support, that do all the leg work for our activities.

I would like to pay tribute to two members we lost during the year – Mary Kelly and Bill Barron, Keller’s husband. A donation to our Ed Fund in honor of either or both is greatly appreciated by the League and by their families.

In closing, I give my many thanks to so many of you who worked behind the scenes and center stage to advance the mission of the LWVCA.”

Your board and committee chairs met on June 21 for a retreat and leadership development session. I am pleased to report that our members can look forward to another exciting and informative year of public policy luncheons, voter services activities, and membership events.

Please see [Page 4](#) for Public Policy Luncheon event details, and our calendar on the front page for dates and times.

Martha

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Thursday, September 18, 2014 – 11:45 AM

Lourie Center - 1650 Park Circle (Pickens at Blossom)



***“The Homeless in the Midlands”* Carla Damron**

Ms. Damron is Executive Director of the SC Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and is a licensed clinical social worker with over 20 years of experience in public mental health clinics, private practice, and mental health administration. **Ms. Damron was recognized in 2000 as the “Outstanding Mental Health Professional of the Year” by the state chapter of NAMI, the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.**

Ms. Damron is also a writer whose “clients are her best teachers.” ‘Death in Zooville’ (2010) -- a murder mystery set among the homeless, with social worker Caleb Knowles as the protagonist. Damron “melds her two careers—writer and social worker” by “using her novels to fight the stigma against people with mental illness.”



Lunch is catered by *Food for Thought* at \$10 per person and begins at 11:45.

*Reservations are required for lunch.
Please reserve by email to SusanBJames@sc.rr.com
no later than Tuesday, September 16

*Your reservation is not required if you are planning to attend the meeting only.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS NATIONAL CONVENTION – DALLAS, TX - JUNE 6 – 10, 2014

So many different women of every shape, color, and size participated in this year's Convention

-- However, they all had one thing in common: They believed in the constitutional right of all citizens to vote.

The National Convention of the League of Women Voters was held in Dallas, Texas, at the Omni Dallas Hotel, from Friday. The schedule offered days filled with plenaries, workshops, caucuses, and an occasional meal. Even the entertainment was tightly scheduled into the day's activities.

Wonderful speakers added insight into some of the problems of the US today. Stephen Murdock, of Rice University, spoke on the demographic trends facing the US. Annise Parker, mayor of Huston, and Peter Harkness, founder of Governing magazine, discussed the reality of governing in cities and states today. And at the banquet, Wade Goodwynn, of National Public Radio, captured our attention with stories of the events he has covered as a journalist.

In addition to the attack on voter's rights, other issues were added to the League's agenda. The League of New Jersey presented a motion that passed dealing with the problem of human trafficking. This issue will now be on the League's list of active concerns.

A motion to adopt a comprehensive three-part program combining study and review of key, specific structures of American democracy passed. The statement included a study of the process of amending the U.S. Constitution; a review and update of the League position on campaign finance in light of forty years of change; and a review of the redistricting process for the U.S. Congress

The League of Kansas proposed that the LWVUS take the position concerning a living wage that it is reasonable to expect government and for-profit businesses that receive tax incentives and/or other public funds to pay a living wage in order to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency.

As a first time member attending the convention, I experienced the excitement of attending such an awesome event. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the other delegates from South Carolina and other states. However, I also suffered temporary confusion over the meanings of League terms and procedures. By the time it was over, I understood pretty much what was happening and knew I wanted to attend the 2016 Convention in Washington, DC.

Julie Sellers



Check out the pictures of some attendees enjoying the Event on [page 6](#)

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The delegates and National Board members from South Carolina: Julie Hussey, Charleston; Dee Woodward, Sumter; Linda Graham, Clemson; Fran Holt, Hilton Head; Peggy Appler, National Broad; Barbara Zia, Charleston; JoAnne Day, Columbia; Nancy Finch, Charleston; Julie Sellers, Columbia.



Wade Goodwynn, an NPR reporter with SC League women after the banquet Sunday night. His speech highlighted some of the interesting issues on which he had reported.



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South Carolina co-president JoAnne Day and Florida president Deirdre Macnab lead the discussion entitled "Successful Strategies in Voter Protection Battles."



FINAL REPORT ON THE 2014 YOUTH VOTER REGISTRATION GRANT

League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area

The League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area was selected to receive \$500 from funds awarded to the South Carolina League of Women Voters in cooperation with the 2014 National League of Women Voters Youth Registration Grant.

In its response to the call for proposals, the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area committed to reaching diverse students at ten high schools in Richland and Lexington counties to facilitate the opportunity for them to register to vote.

The following is an accounting of the results of this action:

- By June 2014, a team of six League volunteers had registered 481 students in twelve high schools. Each student who registered received a sticker that said, “I Registered to Vote Today.”
- By October 2014, each student who registered to vote will receive a post card from the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area congratulating them for registering, encouraging them to vote in the November 2014 election, and reminding them of the documents they will need to take to the polls, including an approved photo ID and a proof of address document.
- Teachers who assisted by registering students in their social studies classes received a certificate of appreciation from the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area and a copy of the League publication, *Know Your State*.
- In addition, each high school that invited League of Women Voters volunteers to register students at the school received a certificate and a copy of *Know Your State*.

School Name	# Students Registered
Eau Claire High School	56
A. C. Flora High School	72
Heyward Career & Technology Center	6
C. A. Johnson High School	16
W. J. Keenan High School	25
Lower Richland High School	8
Richland One Middle College	17
Richland Northeast High School	82
Ridgeview High School	45
Spring Valley High School	36
Swansea High School	50
Westwood High School	68
Total Students Registered	481

STATEWIDE VOTER ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIP:

The LWV OF SOUTH CAROLINA is launching a statewide initiative focusing on building a statewide network and database to register, educate and engage voters. Local Leagues and other organizations have been invited to a planning meeting on August 8th.

Stay tuned for a meeting report.

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SUMMIT & MEETING UPDATES:



CLEAN ENERGY SUMMIT: I was glad I decided to attend the 2014 Clean Energy Summit in Columbia on July 9. Over 150 business people, government and university officials, and members of nonprofit organizations attended this annual conference which highlighted what is going on in SC related to development of clean energy. It was informative and impressive. A highlight of the meeting was a panel discussion with representatives from Santee Cooper, Duke Energy, the SC Coastal Conservation League, SCE&G, The Electric Cooperatives of SC, the SC Public Service Commission Office of Regulatory Staff, and The Inter Tech Group.

SC Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt made it clear to attendees: Investment in wind and solar power production systems in SC is increasing significantly, and their cost has declined substantially in the last several years, making their use more attractive.

Here are some statements made from panelists and presenters during the conference:

- Renewables are going to be a big part of SC and the country. Incentives are still very important for development of renewal energy and keeping prices down is critical to Duke.
- Clean energy is a huge job opportunity for SC. We need to create incentives for investment in manufacturing facilities in rural areas.
- SCE&G is planning to get more involved in the solar business. They stated they expect to increase solar power generation to 40-50 MW by 2020. (* This is far less than some supporters of the SC Solar Energy Bill, who said it would eventually result in production of 300 MW in SC. So where is the rest going to come from?)
- Customer generation of power brings value to the system. It will be an increasing trend across the country.
- The issue of net metering policies needs to be resolved. New SC legislation on net metering is needed. SC is poised to be a leader. The PSC expects to develop a proposed net metering order by next March.
- Passage of the SC Solar Energy bill in 2014 was a major achievement, demonstrating that all parties could work together.
- Storage of energy using solar or nuclear power, such as using batteries to do so, will not happen quickly.

- BMW gets 53% of its energy from trash. Technology for converting trash to energy has been exported to countries like Samoa who have very limited land space for disposing of trash.

It was an excellent and worthwhile opportunity to learn about development and operation of the energy business in SC

__Chester Sansbury

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WATER UPDATE:

Folks, you need to know that we are hearing concerns around the state about low flows in many of our rivers this summer. The article in *The State* concerns the Little Salkehatchie. DNR was asked recently to look at recent drops reported on the Edisto. Whatever is going on, it's not a sudden phenomenon – and there is no one cause. We need more monitoring, more science, more understanding of the relationships between surface and groundwater – and more vigilance from you as well as from state DNR and DHEC authorities. We cannot just sit back and watch our rivers dry up, especially since we are not in a declared drought. If you have concerns about fish kills or other pollution that may be impacting our rivers, please follow these links:

<http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/ReportIt/ReportingChemicalSpillsPollution/>

<http://www.dnr.sc.gov/divisions/wildlife.html> From our partner Ann Timberlake of Conservation Voters.

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STATE LWV MEETING UPDATE: At the LWVSC Board meeting on July 12 a decision was made to postpone League Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) until January 31, 2015. The Board considered the fact that the November election is only a few months away, and state and local leagues will be spending an enormous amount of time on voter registration and education activities. Having LEAD day in January will allow time to plan an informative and high quality program and a time to gather together and recharge after the election and the holidays.

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TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Lill Mood, off board specialist for transportation, submitted the letter below to *The State* newspaper in response to an op-ed in *The State* by Joe Taylor and Daniel Rickenmann (<http://www.thestate.com/2014/07/02/3542332/taylor-rickenmann.html>).

Her letter has been published, and she wants the League to be aware that Mr. Taylor's and Mr. Rickenmann's assessment of CMRTA's progress with the revenue from a portion of the penny tax did not paint an accurate picture. If you have any questions, please contact Lill at lh mood@bellsouth.net. Lill's letter follows:

“Revenue provided for the bus system by the "transportation penny" has enabled the CMRTA to restore and extend weekday and weekend service, replace aging vehicles, develop plans to reach underserved areas and populations, begin providing shelters and benches at bus stops, and re-brand The COMET with a distinctive and vibrant image.

To my surprise, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Rickenmann (Op-Ed 07/02/14) overlooked these accomplishments and focused on one tied vote on the operator contract. Since the sales tax resources gave the CMRTA Board a first opportunity to open the operator contract to applicants, the procurement process has been a new challenge for a diligent and dedicated volunteer Board. Some members believed we had arrived at a sound and beneficial contract, but others were not yet satisfied with the outcome of negotiations. Recognizing the importance of reaching consensus on such an important decision, the Board decided to reopen the process. We are mindful of both time and costs, and are committed to getting the possible operator contract for citizens who are investing in public transportation.”

Lill Mood is also the Lexington County representative to the CMRTA Board.

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MEDIA STARS: –

Al Roblee, as a former precinct clerk, appeared on a WISTV news story aired on June 11 responding to a reporter’s questions on the recruiting and training of poll workers following the primary election held on June 10th.

Laura Valtorta made a short comic film titled "Disability" that was a featured selection at the on-line festival, Shorts Showcase. Please go to www.shortsshowcase.com. In this film, young attorney Sylvia Castro learns to better confront an evil Social Security judge by taking boxing lessons. Although the deadline has passed to vote for her submission, we would like members to know that she is also a filmmaker and submitted a short film to an online festival.

* * *

Retrace History in Upstate New York...

This **October 22-26**, join the League of Women Voters of Florida for a trip to upstate New York! Travel with us as we retrace history and the American suffragist movement!



Tour the homes of Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Harriet Tubman; visit the National Women's Hall of Fame; explore Rochester, Seneca Falls, Auburn, and much more! This is a chance to not only learn about the lives and work of these amazing women (and men!), but stand in the places where history was made!



To register, ctrl + click on the following link:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=jhigmrdb&oeidk=a07e9jzvv1q91648350>

This is a trip you do not want to miss! Click the above link for more information and to sign up today!

* * *



Websites:

National: www.lwv.org/

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

Columbia: www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

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Facebook: *To see our Facebook Page:*

1. Go to YOUR Facebook page and search for the name Bria Tate. [This is the alias that will “travel” with the League’s Facebook page.]
2. Choose the “Bria Tate” with the LWV Logo.
3. Send a FRIEND request to Bria Tate and it will be accepted. You are then connected to the *LWV Columbia Area Facebook page*).

Twitter:

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

Facebook and Twitter email address:

leagueofwomenvoterscolumbia@gmail.com

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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) 576-2061 or check:

www.richlandonline.com/departments/countycouncil/index.asp or www.rcgov.us

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