



# LEAGUE LINES

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

[www.lwvcolumbiasc.org](http://www.lwvcolumbiasc.org)

Editor Suzanne Rhodes / Co-editor Sej Harman

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February 2014

## Calendar

### JANUARY

- 31 (F) LWVUS online membership count deadline

### FEBRUARY

#### Black History Month

#### Recognition of Youth Voters

- 3 (M) LWVCA Board Meeting  
5:00 PM - Lourie Center
- 3 (M) Domestic Violence Town Hall Meeting (link - see p. 7)
- 6 (Th) SC Hearing on Voting,  
3 - 7 PM at Richland County Council chambers, 2020 Hampton Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, (details on p. 2)
- 14 (F) 94<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of founding of League of Women Voters
- 20 (Th) PPL - 11:45 AM
- 25 (Tu) Program Planning Dinner Meeting - 5:30 at Lizard's Thicket on Forest Drive

### MARCH

#### Women's History Month

- 1 (Sa) LWVUS Program Planning reports due
- 3 (M) LWVCA Board Meeting - 5:00 PM - Lourie Ctr.
- 16-22 Sunshine Week
- 16-30 SC Partisan Candidate Filing Period for 2014 Gen. Election
- 20 (Th) PPL - 11:45 am
- 22 (Sa) LWVSC Board Meeting - 10 AM-3 PM - Grecian Gardens

### APRIL

- 26 (Sa) LWVSC Council, 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

## Public Policy Luncheon

Thursday, February 20, 2014 - 11:45 AM

### "South Carolina....Down in the DUMP?"

This month's Public Policy Luncheon focuses on current environmental issues facing our state, particularly the threat of **out-of-state waste disposal**. Shawn Drury, field director for the Conservation Voters of South Carolina (CVSC), is the featured speaker. Also, *Suzanne Rhodes* will introduce the State League Nuclear Waste report.

Drury is leading the grassroots and on-line media campaign for the **Don't Dump on South Carolina Coalition**, of which the SC League of Women Voters is a member. He will speak to pending environmental legislation before the General Assembly. He also will present the CVSC's first **Governor's Report Card**, which will be available at the PPL.

Prior to joining CVSC in September, Drury was the state political editor for Aol/Patch. While there, he was recognized as one of the top political journalists in the country by *The Washington Post*. He has moderated several debates, including the nationally-televised contest in 2013 between Mark Sanford and Elizabeth Colbert Busch and has appeared on numerous local television and radio programs, including MSNBC and C-Span. In addition to working as a journalist, Shawn taught high school English and coached basketball.

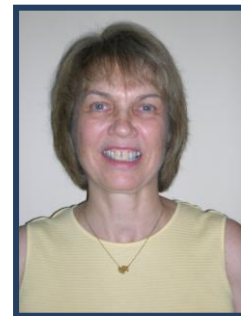
The luncheon will be catered by **Food for Thought** and is available for \$10. Lunch begins at 11:45, with presentation at noon.

Please EMAIL reservations to **SusanBJames@sc.rr.com** before Tuesday, February 18, in order for us to get a headcount for the caterer.



**The Prez Says...****Martha Roblee**

The month of February has been officially set aside to celebrate Black History and to recognize Youth Voters. February 14th is also the 94th Anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. In keeping with this month's observance, the Columbia Area League was awarded a \$500 grant for a youth voter registration initiative, which will be conducted during the spring. **Shirley Geiger, Chairperson, Voter Services Committee**, will lead the project. We will be targeting underrepresented young people by visiting high schools and 2-year colleges in Richland, Lexington, and Fairfield counties. If you would like to volunteer for this important project, please contact Shirley.



On January 8, **Rita Paul, Marcia Synnott, Pat Mohr** and I made a presentation to the 10th grade U.S. History class at Fairfield Central High School on the history of the women's suffrage movement. We began the presentation by showing the Lady Gaga video, titled "A Bad Romance." This was followed by "A Congregation of Amazons," an abbreviated version of Don Mohr's adaptation for reader's theatre of the WGBH TV production "One Woman, One Vote." We had a lot of fun. On January 26th a "Learn More about the LWV of the Columbia Area" session was conducted for members and prospective members. I want to extend my special thanks to **Marzi Knight, Pam Craig, and Sej Harman** for planning and organizing the session and to **Laurel Suggs** for sharing her knowledge about the League at the state and national levels. Our goal is to hold this session on a regular basis. It is a great way to give a better understanding of the League and its programs and activities.

Last, we will hold the annual **Program Planning Meeting** on **Tuesday February 25th**. I encourage all members to attend this important meeting. This year, in addition to considering local League issues, the state and local Leagues participate in the LWVUS Program Planning process by making recommendations concerning national program issues—this is one of the ways we remain a grassroots organization. Thus far, the New Jersey League is requesting concurrence to their position on combating human trafficking and the Ohio League on alternatives to partisan primaries. The Columbia Area League will also be considering a proposal submitted by one of our local League members to revise the national policy position on the presidential electoral process.

As always, lots to do and many opportunities to get involved—big and small. We know that you will find League activity a very gratifying and educational experience.

*Martha***SOUTH CAROLINA HEARING ON VOTING**

**Thursday, February 6, 2014 from 3:00 - 7:00 PM, Richland County Council Chambers,  
2020 Hampton Street, 2nd Floor 29202; ASL interpretation will be provided.**

**Register now at [SCHearing.lawyerscommittee.org](http://SCHearing.lawyerscommittee.org)**

Attention voters, activists, elections officials and all with a stake in South Carolina's elections! We invite you to hear about the state of voting in South Carolina and share your voting experiences. **The hearing is free, nonpartisan, and open to the public!** There will be two panels of witnesses testifying on topics such as voting discrimination, registration and polling place problems, access for voters with disabilities and language minorities, and more.

This hearing is part of a series of fact-finding hearings hosted by the **National Commission on Voting Rights** that are taking place across the country. The goal of these hearings is to learn more about the current landscape of elections. Over the past few years, numerous states have enacted restrictive voting laws, while many others continue to grapple with recurring election administration and electoral reform challenges. The Commission will document issues which keep voters from the ballot box and also election reform efforts that expand access.

The public can participate by providing oral testimony during the hearing's public comment periods and by submitting written testimony before the hearing by email to [NCVR@lawyerscommittee.org](mailto:NCVR@lawyerscommittee.org).

For questions, please contact Rebecca Kelly Arnold at [rarnold@lawyerscommittee.org](mailto:rarnold@lawyerscommittee.org). RSVP is strongly encouraged, but not required. RSVP [here](#). Please share this email notice with your networks, and follow the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag [#NCVR](#).

**Our Growing List of Partners:** ACLU of South Carolina • The Family Unit • League of Women Voters of South Carolina • NAACP LDF • National Action Network • Protection & Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. • The SC Progressive Network

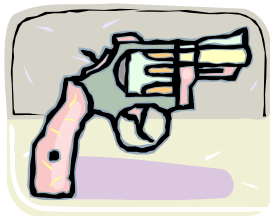
## JANUARY PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON REVIEW

Our Public Policy Luncheon topics are always timely, but the day before the January luncheon, events in a Florida movie theatre led to the death of one man and the wounding of his wife, when a retired police officer fired on the couple. He had become annoyed that they texted during the movie previews. On the day of the luncheon, Senate Bill 308—which would allow concealed firearms in businesses, including those that serve alcohol—took a few more steps toward becoming law.

**Erin Dando**, a “former” Greenville stay-at-home mother of three, with a graduate degree in Urban Planning, had paid no attention to gun violence. But, Newtown (Connecticut) changed her attitude when twenty children and six adults were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Erin’s children are that age, and this horrific event propelled her to action: she needed to be part of the solution. As **President of the South Carolina Chapter of Moms Demand Action**, Erin had met with the Governor’s Office the morning of our luncheon to oppose Senate Bill 308.

A few facts about gun violence: First, to be considered a mass shooting, more than four people must die. **Last year** 12,046 people died in the U.S. by gun violence, including 788 children and teenagers. A side note: at the same time, the NY Times reported that a **total** of 2,292 American service members died in Afghanistan. In the industrialized nations of the world, 87% of the children and 80% of the women who die by gun violence are American. Our nation is at the top of the list in the world, and **our State is number one for women murdered by men**. We, as a State, are number four for law enforcement personnel killed with firearms.

Moms Demand Action, which was formed after the Sandy Hook event, has over 130,000 members and a



chapter in every state. They have partnered with Mayors Against Illegal Guns (MAIG).

The group is striving to (1) increase background checks since, currently, only gun shops are required to perform them, and gun shop sales account for only 40% of the guns sold; (2) ban assault weapons sales, and (3) limit sales of large quantities of ammo. (4) They also want a law that would restrict the sale of guns to the mentally ill and allow them to be flagged in the system. You can learn more about the organization by visiting their website at

[www.momsdemandaction.org](http://www.momsdemandaction.org)

Erin passed around yellow cards that patrons can leave with their restaurant bill. These state opposition to the Senate Bill and make the restaurant aware that you, as a customer, will seriously take into consideration where you would dine should the bill become law. Starbucks has already taken action on this issue by prohibiting weapons on their property.

Mothers Demand Action is a good cause and deserves our support’ Erin’s presentation was a good segue into the second half of our luncheon.

**JoAnne Day**, Co-President of LWVSC, filled in for scheduled speaker **Lynn Teague**, VP Issues and Action - LWVSC; both are Columbia League members. Lynn was at the State House, keeping a close eye on our representatives, because the ethics bill had not yet been passed. The LWVSC day started on the State House steps, where with the support of several congressional representatives, Lynn talked about the need for an ethics bill. Meanwhile, JoAnne presented postcards to those who attended the luncheon, so we could write a comment to our Representative to support ethics reform legislation.

If you did not attend the luncheon, call **your** Representative and tell them you support ethics reform! While you’re at it, speak out against the **Senate Bill 308** regarding concealed weapons in places that serve alcohol.

**Pam Craig**



## MEMBER PROFILE

### Moryah Jackson, Working to Transform Education



February is National Education Month and we are pleased to profile League member **Moryah (pronounced Moy-a) Jackson**, wife, mother of two sons, aged 5 and 9, and director of TransformSC, a statewide initiative that brings together leaders in business, education, and government, with parents, teachers, and students from across the State to achieve the goal of graduating students "ready to compete in a global economy." Moryah works for New Carolina, a non-profit organization "working to increase South Carolina's economic competitiveness" through education initiatives such as Transform SC, Education and Economic Development (EEDA), WorkKeys Career Readiness Certificates, Quick Jobs and Apprenticeship Carolina.

She says, "after what I had thought would be my career—as a Foreign Service officer in the U. S. State Department—life took a different turn. I had known that education had been the key to unlocking doors for me. But what really shaped my thinking about the importance of education was seeing college students sitting, with no complaints, in unheated classrooms on bitterly cold days in the Czech Republic and witnessing school children in Southern Africa rising before dawn to walk five or more miles to get to school so they could sit on the floor in their uniforms, without desks or any of the things I, and most of my peers, took for granted as students. And it hit me—I am looking at the competition facing South Carolina's students—young people in foreign countries who are absolutely greedy for knowledge, who eagerly muster the grit to overcome adversity to get their education.' I believe the women of South Carolina must enter this conversation.

I would say to any woman that even if you do not seek elected office, you should get involved wherever public policy is being discussed. I think women are not at the table because we don't fully appreciate that our experiences have prepared us for leadership and give us important perspectives on social challenges. We must summon the will to help change South Carolina for the better for our children.

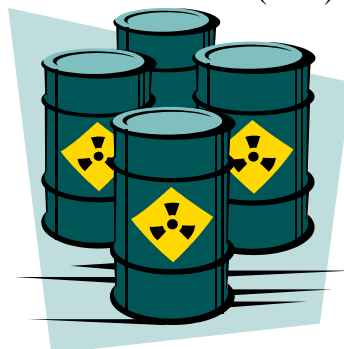
Interview by **Shirley Geiger**

## NEW REPORT ON NUCLEAR WASTE IN SC

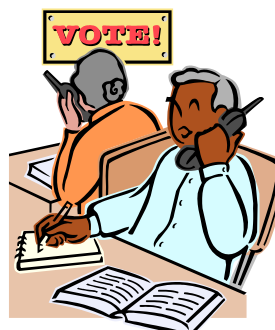
In 1997 **Dr. Mary T. Kelly**, a chemist and Natural Resources Director for the League of Women Voters of South Carolina, authored a groundbreaking document "The Aging of the Nuclear State: A Survey of South Carolina's Nuclear Utilities," that described the nuclear industry in South Carolina. Dr. Kelly wanted to uncover the facts and particularly to focus public attention on the leaking tanks of neglected high-level waste at what is now called the Savannah River Site (SRS).

**Suzanne Rhodes**, LWVSC off-board specialist for nuclear issues, has completed the update of Dr. Kelly's groundbreaking work and the LWVSC is proud to announce its publication.

The purpose of this updated *Issue Brief* is to carry forward Mary's legacy to inform the public about current nuclear affairs in South Carolina and increase understanding of this critical public health, environmental and economic issue for our state. Suzanne will make a brief presentation at the February Public Policy Luncheon. The publication can be found on our website at <http://www.lwvsc.org/whatsnew.html>



## NEW POLL WORKERS NEEDED



As most of you know, Richland County has added 25 new voting precincts this year, so the process has begun to recruit NEW poll workers. If you know of anyone who would be interested in working the polls, please ask them to call Betsy Hill at 803-576-1512 or

[hille@rcgov.us](mailto:hille@rcgov.us) or go to [scvotes.org](http://scvotes.org), click on the poll worker tab to request a Poll Worker Application.

## ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED during PROGRAM PLANNING

LWV Columbia will hold its annual planning meeting on **Tuesday, February 25. This 5:30 meeting will be held at the Lizard's Thicket Restaurant at 3147 Forest Drive, Columbia (near Beltline) in the private meeting room.** Attendees can order from the menu or just participate in the meeting. Feel free to bring friends who are interested in League issues. This is sometimes the liveliest meeting of the year! Look for more information at our web site: [lwcolumbiasc.org](http://lwcolumbiasc.org).

**BACKGROUND:** With statewide and national legislative elections in November, many critical public policy issues will be up for discussion. The Columbia League's **annual planning session, allow us to receive input on the following and other issues, and** will help us proactively address many of these needs. Every two years, local Leagues participate in LWVUS Program Planning (alternating with the State League Program Planning). This is the year that local Leagues participate in the LWVUS Program Planning process by making recommendations concerning program issues and/or discuss issues at the national level.

This year one of our Columbia Area League members, **Jody Thomas**, has proposed for review a revision to the LWVUS position on the electoral process and selection of the President. In addition, Leagues from Ohio, NJ, and MA have made proposals on alternatives to partisan primaries, human trafficking, and campaign finance, respectively.

Local Leagues can propose new studies or recommend a review/update on local public policy issues every year. For example, the City of Columbia's continued urban development and funding, law enforcement leadership and plans to deal with the homeless are possible candidates for discussion - and these name just a few.

Please make every effort to attend and encourage other members to do the same. We hope to receive full participation and ideas from League members.

If enough Leagues request concurrence, one or more of the following proposals could become a recommended item at the LWVUS convention in June. That would make the position process easier at convention. The Program Planning reporting deadline is March 1, 2014.

### ALTERNATIVES TO PARTISAN PRIMARIES

Three Ohio Leagues propose a national study to explore state, county or local primary election provisions to determine the kinds of primaries that have the best chance to increase voter participation and provide competitive general elections. The study would

concentrate on publicly administered primaries but also consider effects of party-conducted nominating processes and look at how independent and minor-party voters' interests are considered in primaries.

#### **This study will:**

- Select and classify examples of primary systems from federal to municipal primaries;
- Gather turnout and other information describing the nomination procedures from state election laws, constitutions, and county or city government charters;
- Compare current primary systems to newly proposed variants currently in the public
- discussion;
- Formulate general principles about primary systems that would likely increase turnout, result in more competitive general elections, and possibly lessen political polarization in all elections.

The need for such a study is grounded in recent election reporting and research which shows that most state and federal legislative district lines have been drawn in ways that exaggerate political homogeneity, resulting in non-representative, skewed legislatures and unaccountable "safe seats." As general elections become increasingly predictable, primaries are the elections where one's vote has a realistic possibility of influencing an election outcome. And yet, partisan primaries often prohibit cross-over voting and appear to disenfranchise non-affiliated or third-party voters. With traditionally sparse turnout (largely each party's activist base), primary winners then commonly advance to a weakly contested or uncontested general election.

### PROPOSED: HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Location of the position (LWV Ohio and New York also have positions, and Texas is in the process):

[http://www.lwvnj.org/issues\\_womenfamily.html](http://www.lwvnj.org/issues_womenfamily.html)

Oppose all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking.

**Women and Family Issues** - Statements of Positions and History –

**ADD: Human Trafficking – 2013** The League of Women Voters opposes all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking. We consider human trafficking to be a form of modern day slavery and believe that every measure should be taken and every effort should be made-through legislation and changes in public policy-to prevent human trafficking. Prosecution and penalization of traffickers and abusers should be established, and existing laws should be

strictly enforced. Extensive essential services for victims should be applied where needed. Education and awareness programs on human trafficking should be established in our communities and in our schools.

### **NEW PROPOSED 28<sup>TH</sup> AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION**

LWV Columbia Area to consider and vote on a proposal to forward to LWVUS for a 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution.

Currently under "Summary of Public Policy Positions: League of Women Voters of the United States – Selection of the President" the current policy reads, "Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. (\*) Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates."

**PROPOSED:** insert at (\*) "If this is not possible, adoption of a Constitutional Amendment that would abolish the use of individual electors and would also state that in the case of an Electoral tie (269 to 269), the ticket with the most popular votes be declared the victor."

**BACKGROUND:** In 24 states the electors are not bound by state law to cast their vote for the intended candidate. In other words they could be bribed to change their vote.

In 1876 Democrat Samuel Tilden defeated Republican Rutherford Hayes 189 to 180 in electoral votes and 4,284,020 to 4,036,576 in the popular vote.

In a deal to end Reconstruction 5 Democratic electors switched their votes and Hayes won 185-184. A stolen election.

1876 could be 2016 under the current system.

There is no rational alternative to letting the popular vote settle an electoral tie.

**Proposed by Jody Thomas,  
LWV of the Columbia Area**

### **CAMPAIGN FINANCE**

LWVUS review and update its existing position on Campaign Finance given how decisions made by the Supreme Court over the last 40 years have impacted campaign financing at all levels of electoral politics.

The LWVUS position on Campaign Finance is an aspirational statement which we support:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue

influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.

Advocacy based on this position continues to be high among the League's legislative priorities. But the League finds itself increasingly hemmed in by Supreme Court decisions. The League continues to file *amicus* briefs that do challenge the Court, most recently in the case of *McCutcheon v FEC*. But its legislative advocacy, which is conducted entirely within the narrowing field left by the Court, has passed the point of diminishing returns.

LWV believes that the distortions introduced by the huge infusion of money into the electoral process are destroying our representative system of government. Our elections have been reduced to trivial exercises during which debate between candidates selected in the "money primary" is confined to thirty-second sound bites on a limited range of topics. We would like to see the League take a more forceful strategy on the impact of money on the political process.

One way to do this would be to join the growing movement to challenge the Supreme Court through the Constitutional Amendment process. We believe that LWV needs to be 'at the table' for this important discussion, regardless of the prospects for success or the time that might be required for adoption of a relevant amendment.

But as a second line of attack, we would like the League position to specify in more detail how we differ from the four decades of Supreme Court decisions beginning with *Buckley v Valeo* (1976). With its emphasis on the First Amendment above all other criteria, the Supreme Court implies that elections are primarily about speech, a vision of democracy that Robert Post has called "discursive democracy," as opposed to the "representative democracy" that the League supports. The Court has explicitly rejected arguments that the drowning out of some speakers by others is a problem. The Supreme Court has also taken a very narrow view of "corruption," limiting it to *quid pro quo* exchanges (a.k.a. bribery.) Its decisions, in short, have left advocates of fair elections, including the League, with no ground on which to stand.

**Proposed by Massachusetts  
Campaign Finance Study Committee**

**President's Day - February 17**





## A Superb Report Released January 22 *The Presidential Commission On Election Administration*

LWVUS commented, in part: “In the end, while the recommendations do not go so far as addressing the administrative barriers created by ever more restrictive voter photo ID, especially in the implementation of online voter registration systems, the report takes a refreshing step back from the partisan political debate surrounding election administration to look at our diffuse system from the point of view of the voter.”

*Excerpt: “Consistent with this approach, the Commission’s key recommendations call for:*

*-modernization of the registration process through continued expansion of online voter registration and expanded state collaboration in improving the accuracy of voter lists;*

*-measures to improve access to the polls through expansion of the period for voting before the traditional Election Day, and through the selection of suitable, well-equipped polling place facilities, such as schools;*

*-state-of-the-art techniques to assure efficient management of polling places, including tools the Commission is publicizing and recommending for the efficient allocation of polling place resources; and,*

*-reforms of the standard-setting and certification process for new voting technology to address soon-to-be antiquated voting machines and to encourage innovation and the adoption of widely available off-the-shelf technologies.”*

Full report at: <http://electionlawblog.org/wp-content/uploads/pcea-final-report.pdf>

## QUICK LINKS

### Websites:

**National** [www.lwv.org/](http://www.lwv.org/)

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

**Columbia** [www.lwvcolumbiasc.org](http://www.lwvcolumbiasc.org)

### Facebook:

- 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.]
- **Choose** the “Bria Tate” with the LWV Logo.
- **Send** a FRIEND request to Bria Tate and it will be accepted. You’ll then have connected to the **LWV Columbia Area** Facebook page).

### Twitter:

- 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](mailto:leagueofwomenvoterscolumbia@gmail.com)

### ANNUAL LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

If you haven’t yet gotten around to giving **YOURSELF** the gift of League membership or **RENEWAL**, now is the time.

As always, you can renew online. Click (or copy into your browser):

<http://lwvcolumbiasc.org/JoinUs.html> and select your level of membership, **or** mail your *Individual* (\$60), *Household* (\$100) or *Student* (\$30) membership check **and** your completed Membership Application Form to: League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area, P. O. Box 12541, Columbia, SC 29211

Forms can be obtained on-line at

[http://lwvcolumbiasc.org/join\\_form.html](http://lwvcolumbiasc.org/join_form.html)

or by emailing Sej Harman @ [sejharman@att.net](mailto:sejharman@att.net) and asking for a Word or PDF attachment to be sent to you.

## Announcement of Interest

### Domestic Violence Town Hall Meeting

Link through Richland District 2

<https://www.richland2.org/Departments/communications/Pages/DomesticviolencetownhallFeb32014.aspx>





### 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](http://www.columbiasc.net) for more information.



### Lexington County Council

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](http://www.lex-co.com)

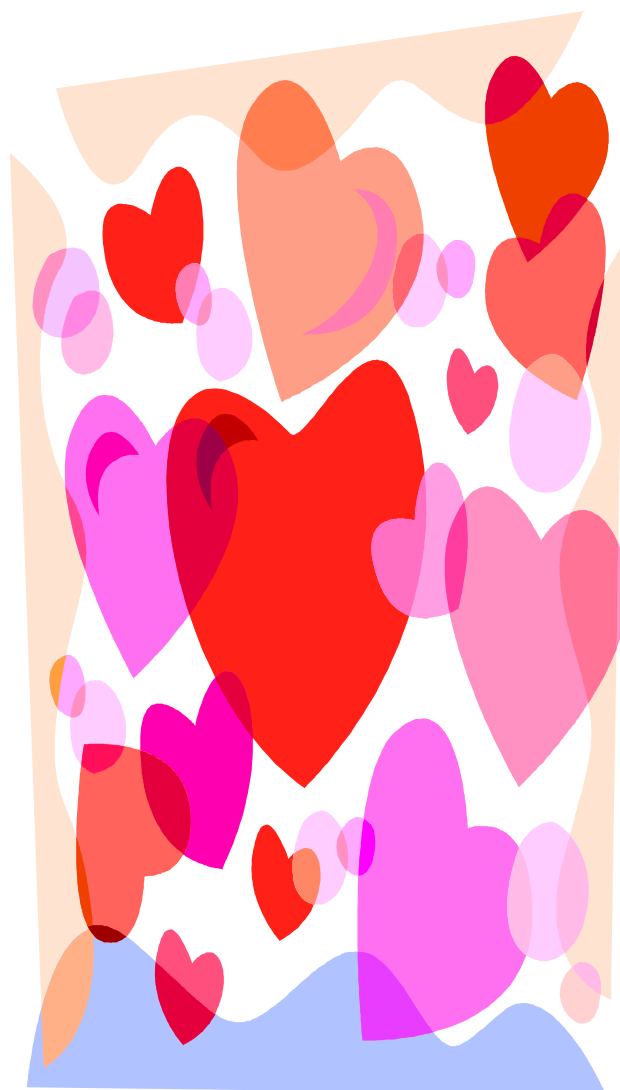


### Richland County Council

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](http://www.richlandonline.com/departments/countycouncil/index.asp) or [www.rcgov.us](http://www.rcgov.us)

*Happy Valentine's Day!*



**2013-2014 Board:** President – Martha Roblee; 1st VP – Julie Sellers; 2nd VP – Sally Huguley; Secretary – Al Roblee; Treasurer – Marianne McGrath. Directors: Pat Forbis (Women's Health), Sej Harman (Communications/Membership), Sarah Leverette (State Liaison), Pat Mohr, Bridget Tripp (Social Media). Nominating Committee (2013-2014): Rita Paul, Susan James. Off-Board: Voter Services – Shirley Geiger; Website – Suzanne Rhodes; Environmental Affairs – Chester Sansbury; Membership – Pam Craig; Outreach – Marzi Knight; *League Lines* – Suzanne Rhodes/Sej Harman (Co-Editors).