

President's Message:

It's almost time for me to pass the gavel. It's been a productive and very busy year for the LWV of the Clemson Area! We have received at least fifteen new members into our organization, including three who joined at our Annual meeting: Bill Steirer, Kathy Hughes and Laura Chapman! The year started off with a bang, with a visit from Elisabeth MacNamara, a Board member of the LWV of the United States. And, since then, we've kept up the momentum! We had lively discussions as we considered the issues related to legal and illegal immigration in preparation for the national consensus process. Please read further details in this newsletter about the results of the Immigration consensus, as approved recently by the Board of LWVUS. We hosted meaty and thoughtful monthly meetings, we discussed Eleanor Clift's book *Founding Sisters and the 19th Amendment*, we participated in the public meetings of the Legislative Delegations, and helped with voter registration drives at Clemson University, at a community festival and at area high schools, where we registered 17 year olds who will turn 18 by November, and thus will be eligible to vote.

One of the highlights of the year was our 40th Anniversary celebration where we recognized the efforts of our founders, five of whom are active members: Holley Ulbrich, Ellen Reneke, Eleanor Hare, Ada Lou Steirer and Berniece Holt. May I, once again, say "thank you" to these women for their foresight forty years ago and inspiration through the years.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president this year. Special thanks to our very active Board: Bea Bailey, Holley Ulbrich, Ada Lou Steirer, Sharon Fennel, Della Baker, Steve Johnson, Catherine Mobley, Aleta Robinson, Eleanor Hare and Kathy Woodard – they are the ones who get the credit for this successful year! I know that you will all give your support to our new President, Bea Bailey, who was elected at our Annual Meeting. She will take office in June – and her first major act is to represent us at the meeting of LWVUS in Portland, Oregon.

May we have forty more productive years! As Lew Fitch said in the final verse of the lyrics which he composed for our 40th anniversary and led us in singing (to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne") at the Annual Meeting: *Let's celebrate the good years past, look toward the future too; while there's a lot that has been done, there's still a lot to do!*

Cheers! Janie Shipley, LWVCA President



Dianne Haselton, at the LWVCA Annual Meeting, receiving her LWVCA scrapbook. This gift was presented to Dianne in appreciation for her many contributions to LWVCA, including overseeing the development, printing and distribution of the Directories of Public Officials – Thanks, Dianne, for your dedication!

***LWVCA General Meeting
Quality Child Care in South Carolina
Tuesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m.***

The importance of quality child care that is affordable gets considerable lip service from most of us. Through powerpoint and discussion, Janet Marsh will share with us the extent to which this lip service has turned into concrete improvements since the 2001-2002 Child Welfare Study and subsequent recommendations. Come prepared to be energized into action!

~Submitted by Jan Marsh

***Conservation Lobby Day,
Held on April Fool's Day, Was No Joke***

On April 1 Bea Bailey and I drove to Columbia to participate in the annual SCLWV Conservation Lobby Day. There we met with Brusi Alexander, LWVSC Director for Natural Resources, Debbie Parker, Program Director of the Conservation Voters of South Carolina, and ten other League members from around the state.

We met in the Nickelodeon Theater, where Debbie gave us a brief orientation about the most timely bills, appropriations, and committee hearings relating to the environment. They were:

- * "Reliable Water" (S. 428), which will regulate the amount of water in rivers and streams to be allocated for business and industry and fishing and recreation. If these bodies of water are not regulated properly they could be severely impacted by industrial and population growth.

- * Conservation Bank funding, which funds the purchase of wild areas and open spaces. Last year it was funded at the level of \$24 million, which was far short of the \$42 million needed to protect targeted areas.

- * Increasing Fuel Efficiency in the State Fleet" (S. 368). This legislation will enable state agencies to put emphasis on purchasing more fuel-efficient vehicles, especially hybrids.

After the orientation we trooped across the street to the State House. There we hung out in the lobby (where else?) that connects the House of Representatives and the Senate. Bea and I paged Sen. Thomas Alexander, and Rep. David Hiott, but they were not available. Fortunately, Bea spotted Rep. Larry Martin and we were able to spend about 10 minutes with him. Later Sen.

Alexander made some time available for us to discuss the Conservation Bank funding (he is on the Senate Finance Committee). Due to projected revenue shortfalls, things do not look good.

Later, Bea and I went to the Blatt Building to sit in on a hearing by the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee. When the "Increasing Fuel Efficiency" bill came up, it passed unanimously, and without debate. Bea and I were thunderstruck. We felt sure someone would oppose it. After a few minutes Bea looked at me and said, "I guess we can head on back to Clemson." I nodded and we rose and left the committee room. As Mayor Abernathy likes to say, "The best part about a trip to Columbia is when you get back on I-26 and look in your rearview mirror and see Columbia disappearing into the distance."

If you have had time to study the environmental voting records in South Carolina (you can find them at <http://www.conservationvotersofsc.org/>) you will see that as a whole, the Upstate has a pretty miserable record, especially when compared with the rest of the state. As I was leaving, Debbie shared an observation with me -- in the last few years she has noticed considerable improvement in the Upstate's environmental voting record. I have the tendency to despair about the politicians in the Upstate not getting it when it comes to the environment, so her comment came as a very pleasant surprise. I have been lobbying for the environment with Upstate legislators for eight years now. Perhaps those long drives to Columbia are paying off. I hope so.

~Submitted by Steve Johnson

***Improving South Carolina Education:
One Day at a Time***

Fellow Leaguers, if you want to get all fired up and inspired and proud in one big sweep, go to an annual Legislative Advocacy Day in Columbia. To summarize all the information presented on Feb. 19, 2008, would be like writing a "term paper." This year three great groups joined in Legislative Advocacy Day: LWVSC, American Association of University Women, and the SC School Improvement Council, about 100 VERY strong advocates for improving education in SC.

We received briefings on the findings of the task forces established by SC Supt. of Educ. Jim Rex. We heard about the vision to build a new South Carolina known as the "go to" state for corporate offices, growing companies, higher paying jobs, well-educated employees who earn a good living and enjoy a good quality of life – in other words, a SC known not for poverty but for breaking the poverty cycle. This web site has useful information and can be found at: <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/divisions/fhr/Task-Force-on-Funding-for-World-Class-Learning.html>.

Another presentation included a look at the results of the largest non-partisan study ever done on education in SC. Cathy Stevens with Furman's Riley Institute discussed the study which involved nearly 800 SC residents representing nine groups closely associated with SC education. Visit <http://cepl.furman.edu> to read about their findings.

Following lunch Kathy Maness, Executive Director, Palmetto State Teachers Association, gave a convincing talk about how she got hooked on politics. She described what she considers the three best advocacy tools: 1) meeting face to face and establishing a working relationship 2) a written letter 3) a personal phone call. She gave many examples of how as few as 20 personal phone calls from "the folks back home" made a difference in the outcome of a vote.

A walk over to the capitol found the Senate in hot debate about the SC pay-day lending industry. I think the Senate didn't want to ban the industry (to save jobs) so were considering ways to monitor and regulate the businesses to protect the people getting loans. I sent a note by page to speak to Sen. Clementa Pinckney about S 205, the Clean Elections legislation he had prefiled. The Senate considered at least 23 amendments to the pay-day lending legislation, and Pinckney voted on every amendment so I never got my chance to speak to him. I did get a moment with Sen. Alexander and asked him to support expanding education for four year olds. He said they were going to try to do more but were limited by funds.

Three tired but inspired LWVCA members made it back Clemson to attend the League meeting on Growth Management. Oh, so many causes!

~ Submitted by Charlotte Holmes

Candidate Forums, Five Months Early, by Popular Demand!

There are a number of primary races for state-level offices in our three counties, and there have been requests that we sponsor candidate forums. Thanks to a group of active League members, we are now organizing some forums. We are inviting candidates from all parties, not just those who are in a contested race in the June 10 primary. Below is the plan, as it stands now. Stay tuned for further details.

May 29, 7:00 p.m., location TBA, Anderson:

* *House District 8 (serving Anderson & Oconee):* Democrats Tom Dobbins vs Charles Griffin; and Republican incumbent Don Bowen (invited)

* *Senate District 4 (serving Anderson, Abbeville and Greenwood):* Democrats Roger Odachowski vs Leonardo Ortiz; Republican incumbent William O'Dell (invited)

June 2, 6:00 p.m., Clemson/Central Library:

* *House District 3 (serving Pickens):* Republicans BR Skelton vs Trey Whitehurst; Democrat Jason Gale

* *Senate District 2: (serving Pickens):* Republicans Larry Martin vs C.J. "Mac" Martin, Jr.

Efforts to organize a forum for House District 2 (serving Oconee and Pickens counties) were not successful.

Highlights of the State Council Meeting held on Saturday, May 3

These notes present "snapshots" of State Council. The next *SC Voter* will contain more information.

Caroline Mullan, a National Board member who co-chaired the Immigration study, spoke to us about how to prepare and execute a study. She defined "consensus" as "substantial agreement, with only minor disagreement." In the Immigration study, 65% agreement was required if a statement was to be included in the consensus results. Most statements included in the consensus received support from 80 to 97% of participants.

Bea Bailey facilitated a panel discussion of global climate change as it relates to South Carolina. Panelists were Joan Brady, a Republican member of the SC House of Representatives; Joseph James, who authored the South Carolina DOE-funded Biomass Market Development Program; Art von Lehe, an attorney with the Coastal Conservation League; and

John Ramsburgh, Chapter Director of the SC Sierra Club. Snippets of the discussion included Rep. Brady telling us that her son drives a car that runs on French fry oil and Mr. Ramsburgh telling us that the average person in SC uses 1000 gallons of gasoline each year, 300 gallons higher than the national average. He said that if SC was a country, it would be the 38th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world and that “energy efficiency is the fastest, cheapest, cleanest way to produce a kilowatt hour.” Rep. Brady told us that net metering has passed the House and is now in the Senate. All agreed that SC can benefit greatly from energy efficiencies.

Alice Henderson talked about effective Voter Service, asking participants to rank voting activities with respect to their ability to make our elections fairer, safer, and more democratic. Joan Dehne continued this discussion, suggesting that red, white and blue items, including flags, can be bought at bargain prices after July 4 and can increase the attractiveness of a display. A decorated table demonstrated how effectively these items increase visibility.

Dr. Jim Rex, State Superintendent of Education, told us that he supports fully accountable, fully assessable, and choice-driven public schools. “A tsunami is coming. It’s called international competition. The only answer is a qualified education for all of our children. We need to do it together. We need to get rid of partisanship.” Summarizing his message as “Reform, Improve, Support Public Education,” he referred us to RISE-SC (www.risesc.net), a non-partisan organization that supports public education.

~Submitted by Eleanor Hare



Left to right: The Honorable Joan Brady, Joseph James, Art von Lehe, and John Ramsburgh discussing global climate change.

The 2008 LWVCA Annual Meeting Was a Grand Success!



Thelma Spencer, keynote speaker at the LWVCA annual meeting, sharing her insider story of Alice Paul and the National Women's Party.

Paesano's banquet room was full of cheer on April 15th as our League celebrated another good year. After cocktails and conversation, President Janie Shipley shared the highlights of the year—reminding us of our 40th Anniversary Celebration, our Focus the Nation outreach, the national consensus on immigration, our book discussions, outstanding programs, voter registration efforts, fundraisers, individual recognition of our 5 charter members, and so much more. Holley Ulbrich recognized Diane Haselton with the President's Award for Distinguished Service. Dianne has served the LWVCA for many years, in many capacities, and has recently retired as the editor of the Directory of Public Officials. Reggie Turetzky presented Dianne with a scrapbook, chronicling Dianne's service and activities through the years as LWVCA member. Bea Bailey, President-Elect, thanked President Shipley for her strong and dedicated leadership. New member, Lew Fitch led the group in singing a song, which he composed in honor of our 40th Anniversary. The dinner hour was filled with engaging exchanges about political events and League efforts. Our food, festive centerpieces and service were just wonderful. As we enjoyed coffee and dessert, Thelma Spencer, keynote speaker, shared her insider story of Alice Paul and the National Women's Party (see photo above). Dr. Elisa Sparks, PhD, artwork was featured that evening as well. Her silkscreen and woodcut creation, entitled *It Hasn't Been That Long, Baby*, features a dozen women, and how old they were in 1920 when women got the right to vote. The evening closed with the promise of a fine year ahead.

~ Submitted by Bea Bailey

Getting to Know the Incoming LWVCA President, Bea Bailey



Dr. Beatrice Bailey is the incoming President for the LWV-CA. She has been a member of the League for several years and has served on the board as newsletter editor and President-Elect. She was also actively involved in the LWVSC's recent effort to co-host a panel discussion at Clemson University as part of the national Focus the Nation initiative to encourage elected representatives to enact clean energy policies.

Bea has been a professor of Secondary Education within the Eugene T. Moore School of Education at Clemson University since 1991. She teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in secondary school curriculum and English education. As a researcher, she is a recipient of the Richard Meade Award for Distinguished Research given by the National Council of Teachers of English. Bea's current research is related to encouraging religious literacy and tolerance within public schools. Recent articles have appeared in *Teachers College Record* (2006), *Educational Studies* (2007) and *Religious Education* (2008). She is also on the executive board of the American Educational Research Association's Special Interest Group on Religion and Education. She has just received from the Moore School the Outstanding Service Award.

Bea earned a B.A. in English from Longwood College, a M.A. in Theology from Bethany Theological Seminary and an Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction from Virginia Tech. She is currently working on a M.A. in history. Bea grew up within a Brethren farming community within the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Boones Mill, Virginia. She resides just outside of the town of Pickens with her husband Rick Bailey. She likes to play tennis and entertain family and friends.

Introducing our New Members!

Many of you are probably wondering how you can help LWVCA, beyond attending meetings and helping with candidate forums. Well, we have an easy way for you to participate: help us to recruit new members! Next year, 2008-2009, promises to be an exciting one for LWVCA. With the impending election, there is a lot to be done this year. You can truly witness democracy in action from the vantage point of your involvement with the non-partisan LWV! So, please invite your friends to our monthly meetings, encourage family and neighbors to attend our candidate forums, and help us to recruit new members!

Now, on to introducing another new member, Laura Chapman!

Laura Chapman is a graduate student in the Nursing Education program at Clemson University. She currently works in the recovery room at St. Francis Hospital. She lives in Greenville and found out about LWV from a friend in her health care policy class. Laura says she joined LWVCA to make a difference: "I want to learn more about our government and want to become more active in our democratic process-so I thought this would be a great way to accomplish both." Laura and her husband have a Maine coon cat -Casper- and enjoy the outdoors. She says that she is "looking forward to all of the adventures that will come being from being a part of this organization."

The LWVCA will surely help Laura to experience the adventure of democracy in action! Please help us extend those benefits to your friends and neighbors, too!

Criminal Justice in South Carolina

The March 25th meeting of the LWVCA focused on the challenging issue of criminal justice. Robin Kimbrough-Melton presented an overview of the trends in what has become an era of mass incarceration. In 2008, one of every 100 adults in the United States is behind bars. South Carolina, which has seen the number of inmates explode by 851% since 1970, spends only \$27.39 per inmate per day, ranking last in the nation in the amount of state funding per prisoner. Of special concern is the fact that as the rate of incarceration increases, so does the number of parents in jail or prison. At present, one in ten American children has a parent who is under criminal justice supervision, incarcerated or on

probation/parole. Parental incarceration, especially maternal incarceration, seriously disrupts the living arrangements of the affected children and often results in depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, school failure, and juvenile delinquency. In fact, children exposed to maternal incarceration may be twice as likely to be incarcerated as children not exposed.

Mary Ann McKenzie discussed the "Middle Court" concept, which is part of Attorney General McAlister's effort to revamp SC's criminal code, eliminating parole and requiring inmates to serve 85 percent of their sentences (otherwise known as Truth In Sentencing). The "Middle Court" concept, would allow first time non-violent offenders to avoid incarceration by carrying out a program of intensive probation involving work, public service, drug testing, treatment, and restitution. These offenders would be expected to appear in court, before a judge at regular intervals, perhaps once a week. Any offender who failed to demonstrate that he/she had responded responsibly could be sent to prison on the spot. This bill is controversial and currently tabled in the SC Legislature while a committee is conducting an extensive and much-needed examination of the entire SC Code of Laws.

Aleta Robinson reported on League activities in the criminal justice area. The Charleston CJ committee met with Jan Ozmint, Director of the SC Department of Corrections. They agreed to promote the education of the inmates through TV programming in every cell. The state CJ committee also met with Attorney General McMaster concerning his "No Parole" and "Middle Court" legislation, sponsored in the SC Senate by our own Sen. Larry Martin. On May 5th, Aleta Robinson and Robin Kimbrough-Melton are attending a conference in Columbia sponsored by the SC Criminal Justice Association. News from this conference will be published in the next Voter.

~ *Submitted by Mary Ann McKenzie*

Breaking News from LWVUS

When space allows, we will feature news from LWVSC and LWVUS. See below for two LWVUS press releases:

Press Release: League Opposes Deportations, Supports Earned Citizenship for Unauthorized Immigrants: The League of Women Voters Announces Its Position on Immigration: Washington, DC- The League of Women Voters announced its official position on immigration reform policy. "After a lengthy and comprehensive study of this complex issue by our grassroots members," said national League president Mary G. Wilson, "the League's position calls for a path to citizenship for current unauthorized immigrants."

"As part of overall immigration reform, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria," Wilson stated. "We oppose deportations of current unauthorized immigrants who have no history of serious criminal activity," she said.

The full immigration policy approved by the national League's Board of Directors in March was studied by the organization's membership for more than eighteen months. The policy achieved member consensus through a survey of the nearly 850 local Leagues. View the full position [here](#).

Other elements of the League's position include support for increased enforcement personnel at borders, more effective tracking of individuals who enter the U.S., and significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers. Furthermore, the League will champion due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment. The League position sets criteria for legal admission to the U.S., including family reunification of spouses or minor children; economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.; political persecution or humanitarian crises; and studying in the U.S.

The League will use this recently adopted position to guide its advocacy work on federal legislation introduced on this very important public policy issue.

~*Attributed to Maggie Duncan, LWVUS*

League Says Supreme Court Voter ID Decision "Disgraceful." Voters Cannot Look to Court to Ensure Fair Elections - Washington, DC - "This is a disgraceful decision by a court that has no credibility on election issues. The court has shown once again that it does not respect voters," said Mary G. Wilson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Because of the procedural status of the case, there was no record on which the Court could judge how great the burden of a photo ID requirement would be on voters. Nonetheless, the three key justices found that the burden was not "excessively burdensome." This finding is "intellectually as well as morally bankrupt," Wilson said.

"There is a concerted effort in this country to disenfranchise legal voters and, unfortunately, this Supreme Court has joined those ugly efforts," Wilson said.

This is a "bad decision for our democracy," Wilson asserted. "Just because the Supreme Court says a bad policy is constitutional doesn't mean legislatures should adopt it," she said. "The League of Women Voters will be fighting against these limitations on democracy in the states and, when necessary, in Congress," she said.

"It is simply disgraceful when the Supreme Court refuses to protect the constitutional voting rights of Americans," Wilson said. "We can no longer look to this Supreme Court to ensure fair elections," Wilson concluded.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana, LWV of Indianapolis and the League of Women Voters of the United States filed a joint amicus brief in the Supreme Court case, *Crawford v. et al.*

~Attributed to Kelly Ceballos, LWVUS

Plants and Books Yard Sale a Soggy Success!

The Plants and Books Yard Sale on March 29 raised \$131.70 before we were rained out of business. Fortunately all remaining books and magazines were boxed up and under cover before the showers came and will be donated to the Clemson University Library book sale--the plants were, of course, happy for the rain as were all gardeners. Thanks to all who brought books and plants and to all who bought books and plants. And many thanks to all who spent a drizzly Saturday morning helping to set up, sell and take down. ~ *Submitted by Laura Georgi & Ellen Reneke*

Plan to Join us for the Fall LWVCA Book Discussion



As announced in the March 2008 LWVCA newsletter, the LWVCA will host another book discussion group. This spring, several members read and discussed Eleanor Clift's book *Founding Sisters and the 19th Amendment*.

There was interest in more reading in the "political" genre, so our next book will be Jeff Greenfield's book *The People's Choice*, a very funny novel about why we should do away with the electoral college. Holley Ulbrich has purchased 14 copies of the book (you can see her in the photo above, taken at the Annual Meeting, when she announced the fall book discussion group). Let her know if you'd like one of her copies. We will read it in the fall when schedules are busy, so be sure to put it on your summer reading list.