

## Message from the Co-President

We have just completed the 10<sup>th</sup> observance of Sunshine Week, an annual nationwide discussion about access to public information and the important role that we – the public – have in keeping our communities healthy, vibrant and strong.

It has been nearly 50 years since the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was signed into law. FOIA grants any person the right to access information from our federal government, plays a critical role in making our government more open and transparent by shedding sunlight on our government, and empowers citizens to strengthen and improve it. Open government is the cornerstone of effective government and a key ingredient in fostering the public's trust. Many instances of the uses of the FOIA in South Carolina to shed light on local and statewide issues have been successful, such as: information from a low country school district being withheld from the public, the media and even school board members; ensuring that a key hearing in the Bobby Harrell ethics case was not held in secret; problems within DSS being exposed by a reporter in Easley, efforts which were stonewalled by the agency and the governor but resulted in shedding light on a serious statewide problem.

We all have the right to know what our government is doing – both its successes and failures. Exercising our right to know gives us power. It allows us to hold elected officials accountable on Election Day and beyond.

For decades, members of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area have acted as government watchdogs at the federal, state and local levels. We believe that transparency and accountability are in the interest of the government and citizens alike. That's why we send observers to local government meetings, work to enact statewide ethics reform and volunteer to get all members of the community registered and out to vote. In short, we work to ensure that all voices are heard as decisions are made about our community's future.

Transparency and accountability are critical to a healthy and trusted government.

Regards,

*Janie Shipley*



**Save the Date!**  
**LWVCA Annual Meeting**  
**Tues., May 5, wine at 6,**  
**Reservations to Bill Hare**  
**Deadline April 28**

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## THE VOTER

League of Women Voter Clemson Area  
 P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633  
[www.lwvclemsonarea.org](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org)

Sandra Gray, Co-President  
 Janie Shipley, Co-President  
 Holley Ulbrich, VP/Program & Action  
 Diana Stafford, Secretary  
 Bill Hare, Treasurer

### ELECTED DIRECTORS:

Eleanor Hare, Webmaster  
 Cheryl Lee  
 Ellen Magee  
 Mary Ann McKenzie, Co-Chair P & A  
 Nicole Paluzzi  
 Mike Stafford, Chair Finance/Fundraising

### APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Paula Appling, VOTER Editor  
 Elaine Epstein, Voter Service Anderson Co  
 Elaine Laiewski, Nominating Comm Chair  
 Elinor Baron, VOTER Mailing

Photo Credits: Eleanor Hare, Mike Stafford

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tues, April 14      **BOARD MEETING**, Clemson City Hall Community Room, 5 p.m.  
Tues, April 21      **GENERAL MEETING**, Update on the Affordable Care Act, OLLI, 7 p.m.  
April 25-26        **STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION** in Hilton Head  
Tues, May 5        **ANNUAL MEETING**, Collins Ole Town, social time at 6 p.m., dinner at 6:30 p.m.  
**Refer to [lwvclemsonarea.org](http://lwvclemsonarea.org) for updates and current information**

*The League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area cordially invites  
members and their guests  
to our Annual Meeting*

***Tuesday, May 5, 2015***

***Wine at 6:00 p.m., Dinner at 6:30 p.m.***

***Collins Ole Town, Central, S.C.***

*Come early to wander through the Ole Town buildings...*

***Walker Miller,***

*Farmer, The Happy Berry in Six Mile and retired professor from Clemson University*

*will speak on **Policies for the Future of Food***

*including aspects of the nexus of climate change, ecosystem destruction,  
soil depletion, water scarcity, and more.*

*Dinner: \$25 per person*

*Buffet includes two choices of meat, several choices of vegetable, coffee, tea and dessert*

*Wine and other beverages provided by LWVCA volunteers*

*We need your reservation no later than April 28.*

*Please email your reservation to Bill Hare at: [wrhare@earthlink.net](mailto:wrhare@earthlink.net) or phone him at 654-4417.*

*Checks should be made out to LWVCA and either mailed to: P.O. Box 802, Clemson SC 29633  
or paid at the door.*

**Collins Ole Town** is a recreated 1930's village, presenting a depression-era country store, barbershop, small corn mill, small sawmill, and a little red schoolhouse. See next page for directions.

## Annual Meeting with Walker Miller Policies for the Future of Food

Walker Miller, farmer, The Happy Berry in Six Mile and retired professor from Clemson University will discuss aspects of the nexus of climate change, ecosystem destruction, soil depletion, water scarcity, increasing availability of cheap fossil fuels and population growth, which reads like a recipe for famine, social disruption (banditry, wars and terrorism) and plagues. The question is how do we get there from here? Suggested readings include "The Sixth Extinction" by Elizabeth Kolbert and "This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs The Climate" by Naomi Klein. Refer to the March *Voter* for more information.

## Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee has prepared a slate of candidates who have agreed to serve in a leadership capacity for the upcoming term. The following nominees will be voted on at the Annual Meeting:

Co-President – 2015-2017

(The other Co-President is Janie Shipley, 2014-2016)

Treasurer – Bill Hare 2015-2017

Director – Patty Warner 2015-2017

Director – Lyn Norton 2015-2017

Director –

2015 Nominating Committee: Rosellen Alequire, Chair, Carol Kozma, Anita Bearden

Submitted by the Nominating Committee: Elaine Laiewski, Chair, Ansley Fraser, Arlene Stewart

## Proposed Budget

Please refer to the March 2015 *Voter* to see the proposed budget for 2015-2016.

## LOCAL PROGRAM

### Education

The LWVCA believes our schools should be adequately financed. Therefore, we support increased taxes, if necessary, for Pickens, Oconee and Anderson County schools.

- The LWVCA supports greater fiscal autonomy for the School Boards of Trustees in Pickens, Oconee and Anderson Counties.
- We support returning to the current structure of the Pickens County School Board with six area seats and three at-large seats.

*Results from the program planning meeting in January include recommendations that we change the last statement to "either one or three at-large seats" in order to provide an odd number of members to reduce the likelihood of tie votes.*

### Growth Management

We support intentional and collaborative growth management in the three county area (Anderson, Oconee, Pickens) of South Carolina. We encourage regular consultations among public agencies related to growth and development and local elected bodies—city councils, county councils, and school boards. We also encourage an open and frequent dialogue between those agencies and the general public on growth management. We support the concept of managing growth to preserve and enhance quality of life for all residents, old and new, through the effective and coordinated use of such land use management tools as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, development impact fees, and zoning where appropriate.

Directions to Collins Ole Town from Clemson: Take Hwy 93 North to Central. Approximately 0.1 mile past the stoplight in Central, turn left under the railroad track and immediately turn right on Gaines Street. Continue on Gaines Street beside the railroad for about one mile. When Gaines Street turns left, continue straight ahead into Collins Ole Town. The sign says "Collins Ole Towne, A 1930s Rural Community")

**Coming in April:  
Health Care with Sonja Albury-Crandall**

Our April 21st meeting will bring us up to date on an issue of great concern to South Carolinians. Sonja Albury-Crandall, a League member and a graduate student in Policy Studies with an extensive background in health care policy, will discuss health care, and affordable health insurance coverage in particular, in South Carolina and around the nation under the Affordable Care Act. The South Carolina League of Women Voters has joined AARP, SC Appleseed, faith-based groups and other organizations in a coalition called **Close the Gap SC** specifically to advocate for health insurance for the poor. The state board is also recommending that we undertake a study of health care affordability in South Carolina that will help us to be more effective advocates for expanded and affordable coverage.

*Submitted by Holley Ulbrich*



Foreground: Janie Shipley (l) and Alice Wald (r). Background shows speaker Nicole Palluzzi.

Have you been a member of the League of Women Voters for 50 years? Our local League is not quite 50 years old, but some of our members may have joined LWVCA after being a member in another location. If you have been a League member for 50 years, please identify yourself to us, and collect your benefits! To do so, e-mail us at [lwwclemson@gmail.com](mailto:lwwclemson@gmail.com) or contact one of the Co-Presidents.

**Report on General Meeting:  
Are Corporations People?**

The March meeting of the Clemson LWV featured LWV CA member and Seneca Attorney Nicole Paluzzi, addressing the question “Are corporations people?” Nicole looked at the First Amendment, the makeup of the Supreme Court, and the decision processes in two court cases that have impacted the league’s position on 1) limits on the influence of money on political campaigns and 2) reproductive choice.

A weak opinion on campaign finance rulings allowed corporations to give to campaigns through non-profits. Nicole explained that there were dissensions on some parts of the decision. The justices agreed that political advertisements must disclose the sponsor of the ad. They allowed direct contributions to candidates by corporations, but said that non-profits did not have to disclose individuals who contributed to them. Nicole showed some statistical data explaining that the 2012 election was three times more expensive than the previous election because it was impacted by the non-disclosure of donors resulting in massive donations to non-profits.

She also talked about the case by Hobby Lobby, a closely-held corporation. Hobby Lobby did not want to pay for certain kinds of contraception in their insurance coverage on religious grounds. The clause in the Affordable Care Act that mandated all twenty types of contraceptives approved by the FDA was struck out by the majority ruling of the Supreme Court justices. Nicole explained that the justices must agree with or strike the entire clause. She pointed out other cases challenging the ACA and the flaws in writing it. Her talk was very informative and drew questions and comments from the audience. Her presentation gave those in attendance a clearer picture of the importance of the two league positions.

*Submitted by Elaine Laiewski*

## Opinion: Bad News for Senior Citizens

The Budget Resolution ([budget.house.gov/uploadedfiles/legislativetext.pdf](http://budget.house.gov/uploadedfiles/legislativetext.pdf), see page 83) recently passed by the House of Representatives substitutes “premium-support payment” for Medicare coverage. These premium-support payments may be used “either to pay for or offset the premium of the plan chosen by the senior, depending on the plan’s cost.”

Trading Medicare for private insurance coverage is a very bad deal for seniors.

Currently, Medicare allows seniors, not private insurance companies, to control their health-care decisions. Compare Medicare and private insurance:

- Medicare will not be cancelled if you get sick. Private insurance companies have a history of cancelling policies when people get sick.
- You cannot be denied Medicare because you are old or have a pre-existing condition. Private insurance companies have a history of refusing to write policies for people who are old or have pre-existing conditions.
- Medicare coverage is comprehensive, covering most of our health problems. Private insurance companies have a history of limiting coverage. The limitations are submerged in difficult-to-understand documents, frequently 50 or more pages in length.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) prevents insurance companies from arbitrarily cancelling policies and denying policies to those with pre-existing conditions. The ACA also requires all policies to provide designated basic coverage.

But, the Budget Resolution’s insurance coverage is not subject to ACA rules and people eligible for Medicare are not allowed to sign up for the ACA.

Since all of us may some day be seniors, the House Resolution is very bad news for all of us.

*Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

## The Green Crescent: Making a More Walk-able, Bike-able Clemson!

“The Clemson area embodies a great mix of people of all ages. Too often, however, when going to school, work, and the great outdoors, it can be difficult and even dangerous without using a car.

“The Green Crescent is an idea from a group of citizens, entrepreneurs, and students dedicated to creating a more walk-able, bike-able, and enjoyable Clemson area by networking community assets. This grassroots effort is taking steps toward making it easier and safer to get from one place to the next in Clemson, Pendleton, Seneca, and Central. We are focused on researching and promoting alternative transportation methods, while also educating others about efforts to transform the greater Clemson area.”

Learn more at their Facebook page “Friends of the Green Crescent Trail” or visit their website at [www.greencrescenttrail.org](http://www.greencrescenttrail.org).

## Influence Public Opinion with your Personal Letters to the Editor

Send a personal letter to the editor! Keep it to 250 words or less and focus on specifics. Send your letter to each paper individually.

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[letters@INDEPENDENTMAIL.com](mailto:letters@INDEPENDENTMAIL.com)

KEOWEE COURIER/WESTMINSTER NEWS:

[westnews@bellsouth.net](mailto:westnews@bellsouth.net)

[www.THEEASLEYPROGRESS.com/section/su-bmitletter](http://www.THEEASLEYPROGRESS.com/section/su-bmitletter)

[PICKENSENTINEL.com/section/formeditor](http://PICKENSENTINEL.com/section/formeditor)

[POWDERSVILLEPOST.com/section/formeditor](http://POWDERSVILLEPOST.com/section/formeditor)

**Wine Tasting Pictures** (counter-clockwise, starting at left: Ron and Laura Goldstein, Aleta Robinson, Jeff Appling (sommelier), Liz Branstead and Ken Marsh, Claudette and John Bennett, Ella Grant, Mike Stafford looking at the array of food! Center top: Don and Ansley Fraser; bottom, Ada Lou Steirer.



Many thanks to Ella Grant for taking care of the kitchen and Jeff Appling for taking care of the wine! Thanks also to everyone who came and made this event another brilliant success!



### Observer Corps: School District of Pickens County – March

The School District of Pickens County Board Meeting was held March 23 to an overflow crowd.

Dr. Danny Merck, Superintendent, celebrated the success of teachers of the year in our public school.

Public invocation was by Mrs. Judy Edwards and was a non-sectarian prayer per the present school prayer policy.

Public input included about 10 ministers advocating for the new policy which would allow them (ministers in the community) to give a prayer in "Jesus' name." Don Lopus spoke on teacher pay raise. Weldon Clark discussed the prayer amendment in favor of it. He is against raising property taxes and wants the board to go after the state. Mr. Tony Qualkenbush talked about the prayer policy and against a legal battle for it. He then prayed a Christian prayer. The Taxpayers Association had several speakers against raising taxes and for the prayer policy including Junius Smith, several pastors (suggesting that the board allow Christian prayers, in Jesus' name), Roger Todd, a pastor, Jimmy Burell, Rusty Smith, Sonia Hodson, Chris Cott, Daniel Hotell, Glenda Sanders, Heidi Williams, James Anthony, David Sustile,

Dr. Henry Wilson gave a Facilities Committee report.

The capital needs plan was discussed.

After extensive discussion of the proposal to allow school board members to give sectarian prayers, a vote was taken. Voting for the proposal were Saita, Bowers, and Wilson. Voting against it: Swords, Edwards, and Cooper. Saita gave a lengthy legal and historical summary of his reasons for voting for it and Swords believes that it will cause undue scrutiny and added legal assaults that will take away money needed for teacher pay. Many people left after the vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.

*Submitted by Cheryl Lee*

### Observer Corps: Clemson Planning Commission Meeting – February

PPC Land Ventures, Inc. presented their proposed planned development for 9.5 acres of land on 139 Anderson Highway. This is the shopping center where Clemson Dry Cleaners is located. The plan calls for another mixed-use dormitory. Present businesses will have to vacate the premises by May 1. Clemson Cleaners is planning to move into former Huddle House and Asian Bistro may close. A public hearing has been set for April 6.

*Submitted by Linda Gahan*

#### Meeting minutes can be found at these addresses:

Clemson City Council: [www.cityofclemson.org/city/city-council-agendas-meetings-and-minutes](http://www.cityofclemson.org/city/city-council-agendas-meetings-and-minutes)

Seneca City Council: [www.seneca.sc.us/Government/CouncilDocuments.aspx](http://www.seneca.sc.us/Government/CouncilDocuments.aspx)

Anderson City Council: [www.cityofandersonsc.com/council/minutes.html](http://www.cityofandersonsc.com/council/minutes.html)

Pickens Co Sch Board: [www.pickens.k12.sc.us/Pages/Board%20of%20Trustees/Meetings%202014-2015.aspx](http://www.pickens.k12.sc.us/Pages/Board%20of%20Trustees/Meetings%202014-2015.aspx)

Pickens County Council: [www.co.pickens.sc.us/council/Agendas/default.aspx](http://www.co.pickens.sc.us/council/Agendas/default.aspx)

Oconee County Council: [www.oconeesc.com/Council/CouncilAgendasMinutes.aspx](http://www.oconeesc.com/Council/CouncilAgendasMinutes.aspx)

Anderson County Council: [www.andersoncountysc.org/web/Council\\_Minutes00.asp](http://www.andersoncountysc.org/web/Council_Minutes00.asp)

Clemson City Council 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 7:30 pm.  
 Seneca City Council 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 pm.  
 Pickens County Council 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 6:30 pm.  
 Oconee County Council 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 pm.

Anderson County Council 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 pm  
 Pickens County School Board 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 7:00 pm.  
 Oconee County School Board 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 6:00 pm.  
 Anderson Co. School Board 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday, 6:00 pm

### Contribution Form

**League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area LWVCA, P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (opt) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I wish my contribution to remain anonymous.

\_\_\_\_ I wish my contribution to be tax deductible where allowed by law. My check is made out to the "*League of Women Voters Ed Fund*" which is a 501(c)(3) organization.

\_\_\_\_ I wish to support the League's action priorities. My check is made out to the "League of Women Voters" and is not tax-deductible.

Visit our website at [www.lwvclemsonarea.org](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org) and contact us at [lwvclemson@gmail.com](mailto:lwvclemson@gmail.com).

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

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Clemson, SC 29633