



# THE VOTER

FEBRUARY 2012 Vol. 39, No 2

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

## President's Message

Hard to believe that it is already February and we are about 2/3 of the way through the League year. We started the year off with action, testifying in January and testimony to the Pickens legislative delegation and doing the same this month in Oconee.



We had a lively and well-attended discussion of voting issues—Photo ID, redistricting, and voting machines—to kick off a big election year. Paula Appling developed a schedule of primaries and elections at all levels that is posted on the LWVCA website. We are looking for volunteers to work in voter service. We will be receiving a small grant to work registrations in area high schools, so if you would like to help with this project, let me or any board member know.

The nominating committee, chaired by Arlene Stewart, is working in February to develop a slate of nominees for the next year. Please think about how you might like to be involved. In addition to serving on the board, you can work with one of our four teams—Finance and Fundraising, Program and Action, Communications and Voter Service, or Membership and Hospitality. You can come to our regular meetings or our 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday Action meetings at lunchtime and make your voice heard. Our league is working on the Youth Vote project to register students in 9 high schools in Pickens, Oconee and Anderson counties. Join us for an organizational meeting at Friends on Feb 3 at noon. What you get out of any organization—satisfaction, accomplishment, impact, and friendships—depends on how much you put into it. Make League a priority in your life in 2012.

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## THE VOTER

League of Women Voter Clemson Area  
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[www.lwvclemsonarea.org](http://www.lwvclemsonarea.org)

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Elaine Epstein, Voter Service Anderson Co  
Della Baker, History and Archives  
Arlene Stewart, Nominating Committee

**HOT TOPICS:** Hot topics in 2012 will look at how decreased state funding has impacted local public schools. How should school districts and citizens respond? The Oconee County meeting will be on March 20<sup>th</sup> at the Steakhouse Cafeteria at noon. Mike Lucas, Superintendent of Oconee County School, will speak. Contact Reggie Turetzky if you have any questions. The Pickens County meeting is planned for April at the House of Leung. Contact Ada Lou Steirer for more information. More to come in March VOTER. ~Submitted by Mary Ann McKenzie

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, FEB 14     **GENERAL MEETING “WHAT’S GOING GREEN IN CLEMSON”**, Presented by Executive Director Al Babinicz, CAT BUS TERMINAL, 7:00 pm-social, 7:30 – 9:00 pm-program.
- Tuesday, FEB 21     **ACTION FRIDAY LUNCHEON**, Western Sizzlin, Clemson, noon.
- Friday, FEB 24     **WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER**, Calhoun Bridge Center, 6:00 pm.
- Tuesday, FEB 28     **LWVSC CONSERVATION LOBBYING DAY**, Statehouse in Columbia, 11:00 am-3:00 pm.

### FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING “What’s Green in Clemson”

The February 14, 2012 meeting of the Clemson Area League of Women Voters will be held at the new Clemson Area Transit (CAT BUS) terminal. Please note that this is different from the regularly scheduled meeting place at the Central-Clemson Library. The terminal is located on West Lane off Highway 93 between Clemson and Central. After passing the Bi-Lo coming from Clemson, turn left at the next traffic light onto West Lane. Mt. Tabor Baptist Church is on the corner and the terminal will be on your right. The program includes a special tour of this state-of-the art 27,000-square-foot “green” building by executive director Al Babinicz. This facility has been called “a showcase of transit facilities and the first and only one of its kind.” Following the tour, Dr. Ken Marsh, Chair of the Clemson Green Ribbon Committee, will update us on the latest “green” initiatives undertaken by the city of Clemson.

The Clemson Area Transit is a public service provided fare-free by Clemson University, the City of Clemson, the Town of Central, the Town of Pendleton, the City of Seneca, Anderson County, the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Federal Transit Administration. In terms of ridership, it is the largest zero-fare bus line in the United States and is the most frequently used transit system in South Carolina. Areas with bus service include Clemson University, the City of Clemson, the County of Anderson, City of Seneca and the Towns of Central and Pendleton. Continued on page 5

### *Wine Tasting – South American Style*

Our big fund-raiser for this year is the Wine Tasting on February 24, 2012 at 6 pm at the Morrison Auditorium at Calhoun Bridge Center in Clemson. Tickets are \$25 a person. There will be heavy hors d’oeuvres and a wine tasting and presentation provided by David Moore of Palmetto Spirits. Reservations are due by February 20<sup>th</sup> and can be made to [wrhare@earthlink.com](mailto:wrhare@earthlink.com) or 654-4417. Alternatively, you can mail a check to our treasurer at LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson SC 29633. If you make a reservation, you are responsible for paying. Hors d’oeuvres will be provided by League members in keeping with the south American theme—Dianne Haselton has recipes and suggestions. All proceeds benefit the League. Dianne Haselton is again coordinating this event, so if you have questions or would like to help, call her at 654-4316.

~Submitted by Dianne Haselton

## Glancing at March Meeting: Privatization

The March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting will be a consensus meeting on privatization. Privatization means many things, but we are specifically concerned with contracting with private for-profit (or sometimes non-profit) firms or organizations to provide services that are funded by taxes. Some kinds of services have been widely privatized for a long time, such as highway construction. Privatization has been as diverse as prison management, mental health services, school transportation, fire protection, garbage collection, airport security (back in the hands of the government now) and even public education in places that use vouchers. What do we want to contract out to private providers? What are the benefits? What are the risks? Is it really more cost-effective? How do we ensure that the firms are accountable for the taxpayer money they receive? Are there intermediate alternatives that we should consider? The consensus questions are now available on the LWVUS web site. Holley Ulbrich, Paula Appling, Ellen Magee and Mary Ann McKenzie are in charge of the program. This is an important issue that deserves our thoughtful attention. *~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich*

## Highlights of National Program Planning

1. Holley will report that we support the Concurrence Proposal of **Sentencing Reform** from the DC League. The policy read: The LWVUS believes alternative to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.
2. The LWVUS opposed mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.
2. The LWVCA (SC) discussed with interest the proposal for a **Department of Peace**. While we were unable to support a cabinet level department, we would support and encourage as an alternative revisiting the relevant positions under social policy and international relations to see if we could add appropriate language in both areas on addressing violence and peaceful resolution of conflict both domestically and internationally.
3. Our LWVCA delegate to National Convention has been instructed to support a resolution for retention and adequate funding for the **U.S. Postal Service**. Eleanor and I will draft a statement and circulate it among all League presidents.
4. The LWVCA (SC) proposes that the LWVUS revisit the position on **Citizen's Right to Vote** adopted in 1982 as part of our Representative Government positions, in order to consider supporting legislation that would set uniform national requirements for registration and voting in electing the president. This proposal is a response to the many efforts to discourage registration and voting through requiring Photo IDs and similar methods.
5. The LWVCA (SC) proposes that the League revisit our current **positions on water resources** under Natural Resources and the United Nations position under International Relations to include protection of the quantity and quality of water flows across international boundaries. Nations in Southeast Asia in particular have been impacted by China's water policies, but the situation is not unique to that region and is likely to become an even more serious source of conflict as development and population growth increase conflicts over access to potable water.
6. Holley will send a note to our national contact person, Mary Klenz (copy to Barbara Zia) that the **national web site** is not very user friendly.
7. Holley will report that we acted under the national position on apportionment to participate in **redistricting** at the state and local level. *~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich \*\*\*\*\**

## RECAP VOTING 2012

Holley Ulbrich, Ellen Magee and Eleanor Hare presented a program that included the current redistricting of SC, the contents of the voter photo ID law and an update on miscounting of votes in the 2010 General Election.

**Voter Photo ID:** Refusal of the Department of Justice (DOJ) to approve the SC law has been appealed. Although legislators claimed prevention of voter fraud as the reason for passing the law, the State Elections Commission (SEC) did not provide the DOJ with any instances of voter impersonation. The existence of pockets of black voters who would be disenfranchised by the law was cited by DOJ. It was observed that a resident of Clemson would need to make the 40-mile round trip to Pickens to obtain the voter photo ID – an ID they would already have if they had a driver's license. The ID that can be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) differs in several respects from the proposed voter photo ID. The DMV ID requires a birth certificate, which the voter photo ID does not. But, a birth certificate can be obtained only if the person already has a photo ID.

**Miscounting of Votes in 2010 General Election:** Over two thousand votes were miscounted. Colleton County had 13,045 votes counted for governor, but only 11,656 ballots cast. Richland County failed to include 1,127 votes in the certified totals. Horry County failed to include 183 votes in the certified totals. More problems occurred elsewhere..Several citizens, working with the League of Women Voters of South Carolina, obtained electronic audit files from 14 counties, wrote computer programs to process the files, and disclosed the counting problems to the SEC and the public. In response, the SEC attempted to obtain electronic data files from all counties and hired a programmer to write the same programs that we had written. (We offered our programs to SEC.) continued on page 5

## LWVCA PROPOSES ADOPTION OF POSITION ON US POST OFFICE

The LWV of the Clemson Area proposes adoption of the following position at the LWV Convention.

**The LWV supports the continued operation of a publicly owned and operated US Post Office.**

**The LWV supports revision of any current laws that are detrimental to the continued operation of a publicly owned post office.**

Rationale: Many citizens are unable to rely on the Internet and email for communication because of the high cost of technology. The cost of a high-speed Internet connection is at least \$500 annually. Furthermore, the cost of maintaining a computer in the face of changing technology is at least \$250 annually. The US Census reported that one in three Americans qualified as poor or low income. To assume that the Internet can replace the functions of the Post Office ignores the fact that many Americans cannot afford direct access to the Internet.

We all rely on the Post Office in many ways. The elderly and disabled rely on the Post Office for communication that does not require transportation. Applications for an initial passport can be done only in person at a post office. Money orders are issued and cashed by the Post Office. Notarized statements, bank statements, tax bills, power bills, water bills, gas bills, phone bills, credit card bills and many other documents are sent by mail. We mail our tax returns to the IRS and to the State Treasurer. Counties mail our property tax bills to us, and we mail a check back to them. Social Security earnings information and Medicare statements are mailed. The Department of Motor Vehicles mails a reminder when a driver's license is about to expire. The State Elections Commission mails absentee ballots and uses confirmation mailings to identify voters who have moved out of the jurisdiction. As an essential function of government, the Post Office delivers letters from constituents to their elected officials and the replies from the officials to their constituents. Citizens have been told in many instances that they are more likely to get a response from a mailed letter than from an email when they contact their elected officials.

Post Office boxes provide an established address for many small organizations. People in prison communicate by mail and receive mailed money orders because they are not allowed to have telephones. Both Federal Express and the United Parcel Service use the post office to deliver small packages locally. The Post Office delivers to many places the internet cannot.

As the prevalence of hacking and internet terrorism increases, we must be concerned about the loss of a backup system if essential mail is dependent on the internet for delivery and response. Internet service can also be interrupted in many areas by electrical outages, and individuals often lose access to the internet because of computer problems, sometimes for an hour, sometimes for much longer. A backup system would allow them to continue to pay bills and communicate in the interim.

The Post Office has agreed to a moratorium until May 15, 2012 on closing postal facilities in order to give Congress the breathing room it needs to enact comprehensive postal reform. This moratorium gives time for all of us to communicate our needs to Congress. Beyond the moratorium, however, we need to ensure the continuation of this essential public service and to fund it adequately to do its work. *~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

### NEW PHOTO ID BLOCKED BY DOJ

The U.S. Department of Justice has blocked implementation of a new law that would require South Carolina voters to present a photo ID in order to vote. Therefore, ID requirements for voting will not change at this time.

Current law requires voters to present one of three items to vote at the polling place:

Driver's License  
S.C. Identification Card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles  
S.C. Voter Registration Card

*~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

### HIGH SPEED RAIL THRU CLEMSON

The Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina Departments of Transportation recently completed a feasibility study evaluating the overall suitability and costs of developing high-speed passenger rail service between Charlotte, NC and Macon, GA as an extension of the high-speed rail from Washington D.C. to Charlotte. If developed, Clemson would be on this route. The current replacement of the railroad underpass on College Avenue (Hwy 133) has been designed to accommodate the track space needs of this new route.

Excerpted from the 2014 City of Clemson Comprehensive Plan (pp. 26-27)





Members of the League of Women Voter of the Clemson Area met at the home of Holley Ulbrich to address National Program Planning. Pictured here are Reggie Turetzky, Eleanor Hare, Ansley Fraser and Dianne Haselton. The contents of the meeting is discussed on page 3 of this issue of the VOTER.

Below are shown other members: Mary Ann McKenzie and Pauling Appling and one nonmember, Holley and Carl's dog, Boudica. Fifteen attended this meeting.

**FEBRUARY MEETING** continued from page 1

The fare-free system is made possible by federal grants and matching funds from the city and University. CAT buses, characterized by their purple and orange color scheme with purple-dimmed lights at night and the "Bike & Ride" bike racks, now boasts the most modern fleet of buses east of the Mississippi River. Utilizing multiple routes and lines, CAT buses help shuttle students from satellite parking to the heart of campus, transport citizens and students from campus or downtown to surrounding neighborhoods and apartment complexes, and move travelers from the Clemson area to surrounding communities. The CAT bus system also connects to the Electric City Transit bus system in Anderson.

The City of Clemson Green Ribbon Committee, headed up by Dr. Marsh, is a group of concerned citizens who seek to lead and to influence the city's ongoing initiatives in implementing innovative and practical steps that will significantly "(1) decrease the city's emission of greenhouse gases; (2) conserve its natural resources, such as land and water; and (3) reduce the environmental impact of waste products, such as heavy metals and toxic chemicals, while (4) increasing healthy living and quality of life for all its residents." This committee hopes to involve all citizens of Clemson through partnering with various groups including officials from City government, businesses, civic organizations, Clemson University, and other institutions of education in its effort to raise awareness and to solicit involvement.

The LWV will begin with a short social time at 7:00 pm followed by the regular meeting and tour at 7:30 pm. The public is invited to attend.

~Submitted by Sandra Gray

**RECAP VOTING 2012** continued from page 3

Neither Orangeburg nor Lancaster County were able to provide the data files. Data was missing from many of the files provided, including about 30,000 ballot images from Charleston County. An audit of all electronic data files after an election would insure that all votes are collected from the voting machines and add greatly to confidence in our voting system.

Now that we have computer programs to process the electronic data files, an audit can be conducted with confidence. We note with considerable appreciation that Mr. Rodney Allen, Director of the Pickens County Registration & Elections Commission has posted these electronic files on his web site after every recent election. ~Submitted by Eleanor Hare



**2012 DPOs**

The 2012 version of the **Directory of Public Officials** for Anderson, Pickens and Oconee counties are available on-line at: <http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/pubs.html#s04>. Printed copies will be available soon. Many thanks to Duke Power for printing them!

~Submitted by Paula Appling

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

Anderson County Council 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 6:00 pm  
Pickens County School Board 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 7:30 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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.

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

P. O. Box 802  
Clemson, SC 29633

[Recipient]

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Address Line 4