



# THE VOTER

FEBRUARY 2013 Vol. 40, No 2

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

## President's Message



A couple of years ago, I found a chart entitled **Failed States Index Interactive Grid**. In it, eleven indices are measured; their sum is a measurement of that country's stability. The countries that you might expect to rank poorly, did. Finland, Sweden and Denmark scored the best. The United States ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in a field of 177 countries. Our worst score, with no close second, is "Uneven Economic Development"; this has been our worst score for a number of years. The significance of this was made clear when I watched a TED talk recently by Richard Wilkinson: **How economic inequality harms societies**. When Wilkinson plotted life expectancy against Gross National Income, there was no correlation. However, looking at economic inequality in rich developed countries, by comparing the top 20% to the bottom 20%, some surprising correlations were revealed. Greater inequality resulted in higher infant mortality, homicides, imprisonment, teenage births, lack of trust, obesity, and mental illness (including drug and alcohol addiction). Greater inequality also resulted in lower literacy and life expectancy. Perhaps more telling was a study focusing on one aspect, which happened to be infant mortality, in which each segment of economic strata in England and Wales (greater economic inequality) were compared to comparable economic strata in Sweden (lower economic inequality). The study revealed lower mortality rates for each economic segment in Sweden. It seems there is a quantifiable benefit to living in a more equal society, regardless of your economic level.

January and February are packed! Here's what's happening: work is commencing on the Budget and Nominating Committees, new editors are updating DPOs, Health Care flyer is being distributed, we are participating in a survey concerning the National Voter Registration Act, and various meetings: State Program Planning meeting, a Campaign Finance meeting and a Consensus meeting on Teacher Effectiveness, Hot Topics luncheon – Hot Topics in Pickens County! – and everyone's favorite, the Wine Tasting! Find a friend or two to invite!

To everyone who has played a small part – or a large part! – in educating the public, educating our legislators or educating themselves, I thank you.

Yours in League,

*Paul Appling*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1
Calendar	2
February General Meeting	2
Pickens Co. Hot Topics Luncheon	2
THANKS!!!	2
Consensus Questions on Teacher Effectiveness Study	3
Presentation to the Pickens County Legislative Delegation	4
Observer Corps - Registration and Election Commission	4
Photo ID Requirements for 2013	5
One Woman's Opinion	5
Medicare Expansion in SC	6
LWVSC Convention – Apr 27-28	7
Wine Tasting Fundraiser	7
Dollar & Sense in American Politics	7
Observer Corps Schedule	8
Contribution Form	8

## THE VOTER

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

- Paula Appling, President  
Sandra Gray, President Elect  
Holley Ulbrich, VP/Program Co-chair  
Elaine Laiewski, Secretary  
Bill Hare, Treasurer/Finance Co-chair
- DIRECTORS:**  
Barbara Hamberg, Program Co-Chair  
Diana Stafford  
Matt Laiewski  
Eleanor Hare, Webmaster  
Pattilee Tate, Finance/Fundraising Chair  
Lib Crockett, Membership Co-chair  
Lauretta Park, Membership Co-chair  
Reggie Turetzky, PR/Comm/Voter Service  
Linda Gahan, PR Co-chair/Voter Editor
- OFF BOARD:**  
Bill Hare, Voter Service Pickens Co.  
Elaine Epstein, Voter Service Anderson Co  
Della Baker, History and Archives  
Janie Shipley, Nominating Committee

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, Feb. 5 **LWVCA BOARD MEETING**, Clemson Community Meeting Room, 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, Feb. 5 **PHOTO ID SEMINAR**, PC Administration Facility Auditorium, 10:00 am – noon.
- Thursday, Feb. 7 **PHOTO ID SEMINAR**, PC Administration Facility Auditorium, 6:00 – 8:00 pm.
- Tuesday, Feb. 12 **FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING: “Campaign Finance Reform”** Central/Clemson Library, 7:00 pm social, 7:30 pm program
- Friday, Feb 15 **PICKENS COUNTY HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON**, Hibachi Buffet Grill, Clemson Blvd, US 123, 11:15 am – 1:30 pm
- Saturday, Feb 23 **WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER**, with David Moore at Palmetto Spirits, ARTS Center, 6:00 pm. \$30/ ticket or \$100/4 tickets.

### February General Meeting: “Consensus on Teacher Effectiveness”

The February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting on teacher effectiveness will be our only consensus meeting this year. Consensus is at the heart of the League, where we study an issue and respond to questions so as to help state or national League (state, in this case) to formulate a position on which we can then take action. The presentation team consists of Sue Medlock, Elaine Park, Donna London (moderator/facilitator), and Mary Ann McKenzie (consensus recorder). State League provided the background materials and the consensus questions that are in this issue of the local VOTER. Here is a distillation of the background information on teacher effectiveness.

Teachers vary widely in effectiveness in terms of the achievement gains made by their students. Students assigned to effective teachers are more likely to attend college and earn more money than those with ineffective teachers. Yet very few poor teachers are dismissed and excellence is generally unrecognized. Teacher qualifications (degrees, experience, etc) are not a proxy for effectiveness.

While 98% of SC teachers were rated satisfactory in 2010-11, their students were not. Between 20 and 30 percent of students did not mean minimum state standards on reading (depending on grade level); 22-39% on math, and 19-31% on social studies. If we want effective teaching, some argue that it should be measured by value-added—the increase in student achievement after taking other factors outside the control of the teacher into account. Others disagree, arguing that too much emphasis is placed on student test scores. But there needs to be some method of assessing teachers that attracts, retains and rewards effective teaching while eliminating the least effective teachers and improving skills for all teachers. There is a national movement to improve teacher evaluation; 32 states and the District of Columbia have adopted new evaluation policies, 24 states require annual evaluation for all teachers, and 22 states require evidence of student growth. Continued on page 3

### *Pickens Co. “Hot Topics” Luncheon*

On Friday, February 15, 2013 Jeff Martin, the elected representative to the Pickens County Council from District 1, will discuss the key expected to be considered by the Council in 2013. This event is the annual hot topics luncheon and will be held at the Hibachi Buffet Grill on US 123 from 11:15 am to 1:30 pm. Leaguers and their friends should arrive by 11:30, pay as you enter the restaurant, get a plate, serve yourself and take it to the private room set up for this occasion. Jeff Martin will make a 20-minute presentation and the take questions from those participating. Come and be informed about Pickens County issues.

Charlotte Holmes and Liz Branstead are organizing this event. There will be NO discussion on the TIF lawsuit since it has not been resolved.

~Submitted by Charlotte Holmes

### THANKS!!!!

LWVCA has a New Banner! Many, many thanks to Christian Wilson for doing the graphics, Rett Park for the partial funding, and Janie Shipley and Arlene Stewart for the idea and the example. Special thanks goes to Jean Wood from Greenville League for directing us to TPM in Greenville who did the job for a price we could pay. Look for it at the next meeting!

Reggie Turetzky wishes to thank all volunteers for making the three General Election forums a success. These included Kathy Woodard, Linda Gahan and Paula Appling for moderating, Sandra Gray for timing, Lib Crockett, Carol Kozma, Trudi Lampe, Ingrid Lampe, Margie Langston, Janie Shipley and Alice Wald for the question cards and Eleanor Hare and Jeff Appling for photographing the events.

Thanks to Duke Energy for printing our 2012 DPOs.

## Consensus on Teacher Effectiveness continued

The use of standardized achievement tests has been criticized because of narrow scope, unreliability, unintended consequences, and the lack of incentives for students to perform well. Other measures are needed such as classroom observation, student portfolios, lesson plans, surveys of parents and/or students, peer assessment, etc. that will enable supervisors to distinguish between excellent, average and poor teacher performance and provide timely feedback as well as input into decisions about tenure, retention, and pay. Many other states use three to five rating categories with multiply measures.

The South Carolina evaluation system is called ADEPT. The emphasis is on new teachers, first and second year formal evaluations with 92% meeting the standards at entry and 75% meeting them after the second year evaluation. However, it tends to be a pass/fail system, with most teachers after the first two years being rated satisfactory. The criteria are inputs rather than results—planning, instruction, classroom environment, professionalism, etc. Right now the SC Department of Education is looking at teacher evaluation systems that include indicators of increased student achievement with implementation targeted for the 2014 -15 school year. ~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

### LWVSC Study on Evaluation and Retention of Effective Teachers, 2011-2013 CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

1. *There is solid evidence and widespread agreement by the education community that:*
  - a. *An effective teacher is the most important school-based determinant of academic achievement.*
  - b. *An effective teacher is critical to provision of a high-quality education.*
  - c. *School districts should ensure that there are effective teachers for all students.*

**Agree/ Disagree**
2. *In an effort to identify and retain effective teachers, many states are adopting comprehensive evaluation policies that evaluate teachers at least in part according to student achievement. Should student achievement be a factor in rating teacher effectiveness?*  
**Yes/No**
3. *If the answer to question #2 is “no”, what action should be taken to assure that every child has an effective teacher?*  
**Please explain.**
4. *If the answer to question #2 is “yes”, should all teachers be evaluated?*  
**Yes/No**
5. *It has been documented that many school districts fail to recognize and respond to the variations in the effectiveness of teachers due in part to rating systems that have two categories: satisfactory and unsatisfactory.*
  - a. *Should an evaluation system be able to distinguish between superior, average and ineffective teachers?*  
**Yes/No**
  - b. *If “yes”, should the rating scale contain three or more categories, e.g., highly effective, effective, needs improvement, ineffective?*  
**Yes/No**
6. *Which of the following are appropriate uses for teacher evaluations: (Check all that apply)*
  - a. *Provide feedback to assist teachers in developing their skills?*
  - b. *Inform decisions about retention and dismissal?*
  - c. *Make teacher assignments, e.g. lead teacher, department chair?*
  - d. *Inform decisions about compensation?*
  - e. *Other*
7. *What are the essential elements of a fair evaluation system? (Check all that apply.)*
  - a. *Clear, widely accepted standards*
  - b. *Trained evaluators*
  - c. *Consistency among evaluators*
  - d. *Other*
8. *Should teachers participate in developing and implementing the evaluation system?*  
**Yes/No**
9. *Should South Carolina modify its existing teacher evaluation system to incorporate:*
  - a. *More definitive measures of student academic achievement to evaluate teacher performance?*  
**Yes/No**
  - b. *A rating scale of three or more categories?*  
**Yes/No**
10. *Who should be responsible for the cost of evaluation: (Check one)*
  - a. *State*
  - b. *Local School District*
  - c. *Combination*
  - d. *Other*

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

**LWVCA PRESENTATION TO PICKENS CO. LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION JAN 3, 2013**

I am \_\_\_\_\_, representing the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area. The Clemson League has been serving this area for 45 years in helping citizens to be informed and participate actively in the democratic process through public meetings, voter registration, candidate forums and study and action on local, state and national issues. We are here today to address positions adopted by Leagues around the state on two legislative issues: education funding and home rule.

We are disturbed by the decline in the level of state funding for public education and by the shift in the distribution of state funds that resulted from a combination of Act 388 and underfunding EFA. Together the result was a shift of state aid to wealthier districts with more high-valued homes and away from poorer districts with fewer high valued homes and more dependence on EFA funding. We urge you to fully fund EFA and to reconsider some of the provisions of Act 388, particularly the guarantee of \$2.5 million per county, which only helped a few districts. State aid funds school districts and pupils, not counties, which are not education providers. We urge you to convert that provision to a per district, per pupil guarantee that will help smaller districts in multi-district counties, including District 3 in Anderson. Anderson 3, which includes Starr and Iva, received only \$301 per pupil from Act 388 in 2010, compared to a state average of \$911. Citizens in poorer districts like Anderson 3 pay sales taxes to support property tax relief under Act 388, but some of them receive little benefit. We are also concerned about proposed legislation changing the way education is funded. While we encourage further consideration of requiring each district to levy at least 100 mills for school operations as their local match for EFA, we do not want to see it converted to a state property tax, further diluting local control and ownership of the public schools.

Home rule has been an issue of concern to the League ever since the mid1970s, when some degree of autonomy was granted to counties. Important dimensions of home rule were not addressed at that time or since. School boards are elected bodies, and the citizens in those school districts who elect those board members should have some say in the composition of the school board. There is one county in South Carolina with three school districts in which the legislative delegation (with only one member resident in that county) appoints the county board and the county board appoints the district boards. This situation may be extreme, but there have been problems in other counties as well. This is not an issue of fiscal autonomy, because we recognize that the state has a substantial role in funding public education and perhaps needs to have a strong voice in that area. It is an issue of democratic process that has played out in different ways across the state in Sumter, in Hampton, in Dillon, in Fairfield, and other places. The other dimension of home rule is appointments made on the recommendation of the legislative delegation. We are particularly concerned about state level appointments made on the basis of judicial circuits, because the judicial circuits are very unequal in size. We also would like to see the legislative delegation cede any remaining county-level appointment powers to the elected county councils.

Thank you for inviting citizen input, and for all the work you do on behalf of the citizens of Pickens County and of the state of South Carolina. ~Submitted by *Holley Ulbrich*

**Eleanor Hare**, co-chair of the Alternative Voting Technologies Task Force of LWV-SC, made a prepared statement to the Pickens County Legislative Delegation on January 12. She described recently discovered problems with inaccurate certification of the vote, maintenance problems of current voting machines, and possible future technologies. She closed with a request that selection of a replacement voting system be accompanied by open and transparent discussions with the people of South Carolina.

The text of this prepared statement is on our web site at

<http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/files/Jan2013.TaskForcePresentPickensCoLegislativeDel.pdf>

~Submitted by *Eleanor Hare*

**Observer Report: January Meeting of the Pickens County Elections Commission**

Frances Plotnik and Aleta Robinson attended the meeting on January 15, 2013 at the offices of the Registration & Election Commission. We had not observed this meeting before and were not prepared to speak to the group. We were welcomed and chairs and paperwork had been provided.

Members are: June Bowers, Chair; Geneva Robinson, Vice-Chair; Sheree Chapman, Secretary; Noel Anderson; Gretchen Campbell; Mary Jane Goolsby; and Herb Thompson.

During the "Public Comment" part of the meeting, Aleta asked why the titles of the poll workers were reversed: the Clerk is in charge of the precinct, and the Managers are the workers. The titles were established in the laws governing the elections in SC.

Director Rodney Allen gave his report:

- Review of the 2012 Election Year for Pickens County: Our county had no voting lines longer than 15 minutes and problems during the day were handled by the office. New voter registration cards mailed prior to the general election were mishandled by the post office, and many did not arrive in time.
- The budget is tight for this coming year, and more staff is needed to conduct the upcoming local primaries in the county. Mr. Allen listed these municipal elections.
- Legislation to correct the problems of candidate filing and the errors of the elections this past year has been introduced by Sen. Larry Martin.
- The Voter ID law is now in effect for this year, and pamphlets are ready to distribute. The office will conduct two workshops in the county, explaining the new law. Notices will be published in the newspapers and on the website. The dates are February 5 and 7.

New officers were elected, and we left prior to their executive session. The website is: [pickenselections.org](http://pickenselections.org) ~Submitted by *Aleta Robinson*

## PHOTO ID REQUIREMENTS- NEW FOR 2013

## ONE WOMAN'S OPINION: SCHOOL CHOICE

Beginning January 1, 2013, you will be asked to show one of the following photo IDs at your polling place:

- SC Driver's License
- ID Card issued by SC Department of Motor Vehicles
- SC Voter Registration Card with Photo
- Federal Military ID
- US Passport

### HOW TO GET A PHOTO ID:

If you do not currently have one of the Photo IDs above, you can make your voting experience as fast and easy as possible by getting one free of charge:

- Registered voters can get a voter registration card with a photo from Pickens County Registration & Elections Commission during normal office hours by simply providing your date of birth and last four digits of your Social Security Number
- Get a DMV ID card at a local DMV office. Check with DMV or [scdmvonline.com](http://scdmvonline.com) for required documents.

### IF YOU DO NOT HAVE PHOTO ID ON ELECTION DAY:

If you have a reasonable impediment to obtaining Photo ID, you may vote a paper provisional ballot after showing your non-photo registration card. A reasonable impediment is any valid reason beyond your control, which created an obstacle to obtaining Photo ID. Some examples include:

- Religious objection to being photographed
- Disability or illness
- Work Schedule
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of birth certificate
- Family responsibilities
- Election within short time frame of implementation of Photo ID law
- Any other obstacle you find reasonable

To vote under the reasonable impediment exception:

1. Present your current, non-photo registration card at the polling place
2. Sign an affidavit stating why you could not obtain a Photo ID
3. Cast a provisional ballot that will be counted unless the Pickens County Registration & Elections Commission has reason to believe your affidavit is false.

If you do NOT have Photo ID and do NOT have a reasonable impediment to obtaining one, or you simply forgot to bring it with you to the polls, you may still vote a paper provisional ballot. However, for your ballot to be counted, you must provide one of the Photo IDs to the Pickens County Registration & Election Commission prior to certification of the election (usually Thursday or Friday after the election).

The rules for registering to voter will not change.

*Printed with permission of the Registration & Election Commission from their website.*

State Sen. Larry Grooms (R-Berkley) has introduced a bill that would give tax deductions to parents who send them to private schools or who home school. This is the same issue we are faced with year after year. Call it tax deductions, tax credits, vouchers....whatever. It all serves the purpose to undercut the funding of public schools. For me these types of bills are about many things, but I want to focus on the ugly underbelly of this bill. In the poor and usually rural counties of South Carolina, many private schools were set up during desegregation. These schools remain in place with the majority of students attending private schools being white and the majority of the students attending public schools being minority. To me these types of bills, which help to pay for private school tuition, support segregation. I do not want tax dollars supporting segregation. For me it is a moral issue.

It is also bad for economic growth. Who is going to build/develop/invest in areas that for all intent and purposes have an unacceptable public school system and also a segregated one?

Another issue is the continuing siphoning of monies from the public school system. The estimated cost of these types of tax breaks/credits/vouchers is \$37 million.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Finance Committee. Hugh Leatherman is the chair (R-Florence). Leatherman said he wouldn't rule out school choice, but hasn't supported it in the past. He says, "we need all the money in the public school system we can get."

Please contact members of the Senate Finance Committee and tell them that you do not support any bills for tax credits/vouchers/tax deductions. Let us work to support the public school system!

The link to the Senate Finance Committee is <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/committeeinfo/senatefinance.php>

The complete news story can be found at this link to the article in The State

<http://www.thestate.com/2013/01/25/2603904/school-choice-bill-introduced.html>

Wanda Meade worked for almost 30 years as a counselor and administrator in the Pickens County Schools System.

## MEDICARE EXPANSION IN SC

The LWVSC joined the Accept ME (MEDICAID EXPANSION) Coalition that supports SC accepting Medicaid Expansion as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Sonya Allbury-Crandall forwarded me a weekly legislative update from the SC Hospital Association.

### House Committee Considers "State Healthcare Freedom Act"

The House Labor, Commerce and Industry Health insurance subcommittee met Wednesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> and gave [H.3096](#), the State Healthcare Freedom Act, a favorable as amended report. The bill's sponsor, Representative Clemmons (R-Horry), told the subcommittee that his bill serves to endorse the Governors' sentiments to not establish a healthcare exchange in South Carolina as well as provide that this decision would be determined by the legislature, rather than the Governor. Twenty-five states have already opted out of running their own exchange. LCI Chairman Sandifer reminded the subcommittee that if the state opted out, the federal government would run the exchange. Jim Ritchie, Executive Director of the South Carolina Association of Health Plans, testified that his organization supports legislators being given the authority to determine setting up an exchange. He also applauded legislators' efforts to "push back from the federal government" and advised them to take advantage of opportunities to seize control of a federal exchange through regulations. Sandifer said the Governor did not make her "decision in a vacuum. The feds said to establish the state exchange according to federal regulations. Representative Crawford, in support of the legislation, said clarifications needed to be made and "policy should be made by the policy body." The amendment provides that the state will not establish an exchange or participate in an exchange as provided for by the Affordable Care Act or federal regulations. The full committee met Thursday morning and reported the bill out favorable as amended.

### Medicaid Expansion - Did You Know?

South Carolina hospitals are being cut **\$2.6 billion** to help pay for Medicaid expansion and other aspects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Hospitals agreed to these cuts in 2010 in exchange for more health coverage through Medicaid and newly created health exchanges. These cuts remain in place whether or not our state expands Medicaid, and will put a financial strain on South Carolina hospitals and their ability to provide high quality healthcare services. Meanwhile, those funds will go to other states to reduce their uninsured populations and increase overall health while South Carolina doesn't receive the full benefits of the ACA.

### FLYER INFORMATION

South Carolinians need the security of affordable health care. Affordable health care means we can keep our families and ourselves healthy, keep our jobs, sustain the self-employed and start new businesses. Affordable health care ensures that our kids can thrive and be successful. Expanding Medicaid will help older Americans who've lost their jobs or are struggling in jobs without health benefits.

Implementing new health care solutions is the best choice for South Carolina, our citizens, our economy, and our future. We will be making a smart investment in our state's economy and workforce. Our state's health system will be stronger and more cost-effective, and hardworking SC residents will be healthier.

Medicaid provides many South Carolinians – children, seniors living at home and in nursing homes, and people with disabilities – indispensable health and long term care. Now we can build on these successes and make coverage affordable for more working adults and families.

Many of our state hospitals and other healthcare providers rely on Medicaid dollars to provide essential services and equipment. More than 329,000 people in our state earn less than the \$15,000 a year and do not have health insurance. People with access to health care are healthier and more productive. We, the undersigned, urge our South Carolina lawmakers to make sure our friends and neighbors are able to access affordable and appropriate healthcare through our Medicaid program.

AARP-SC, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Stroke Association, Columbia Urban League, Inc., Disability Action Center, Inc. disAbility Resource Center, Federation of Families of SC, LWVSC, NAACP, National Alliance on Mental Illness SC, Palmetto Project, Protection and Advocacy for people with Disabilities, Inc., SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center, SC Primary Health Care Association, SC Christian Action Council, SC Small Business Chamber of Commerce, SC Cancer Alliance. *~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

**LWVSC Convention 2013 Information**  
**Spartanburg County, SC**  
**April 27-28, 2013**

**Honoring Our Past as We Grow the League's Future**

Convention Hotel: Hampton Inn & Suites, 108 Spartanburg Blvd., Duncan, SC 29334 Enjoy complementary parking, hot breakfast bar, in-room wireless Internet access, heated pool, fitness facility. You can make hotel reservations for Convention 2013 in 2 ways:

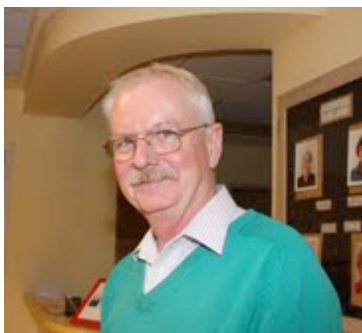
1. Call Hampton Inn at 864-486-8100 and ask for the League of Women Voters with the date.
2. Book at [https://secure3.hilton.com/en\\_US/hp/reservation/book.htm?execution=e2s1](https://secure3.hilton.com/en_US/hp/reservation/book.htm?execution=e2s1). Enter the code "ZIA."

The special LWV rate is: \$92.00, plus tax, for single/double rooms.

Buffet lunches will be served at Hampton Inn by DeMetre's, an outstanding Duncan restaurant and caterer. The Convention Banquet on Saturday evening will be held at DeMetre's Gourmet Grille, 1384 E. Main Street, Duncan (near Hampton Inn, hotel shuttle bus will be available.

**WINE TASTING – ITALIAN THEME**

Our big fund-raiser for this year is the Wine Tasting on February 23, 2013 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Morrison Auditorium at Calhoun Bridge Center in Clemson. Tickets are \$30 a person or 4/\$100. 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 19<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. League members in keeping with the Italian theme will provide hors d'oeuvres. 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.



**DOLLARS & SENSE IN AMERICAN POLITICS:**

The January 8, 2013 meeting of the Clemson Area League of Women Voters was held at the Clemson Free Clinic. Joseph Stewart, Jr. (Ph.D., Houston, 1977) is Professor in the Political Science Department at Clemson University and spoke to us about "Dollar and "Sense?" in American Politics." He has longtime ties with the LWV and was faculty advisor of the LWV while at the University of New Mexico.

The 2012 election was the most expensive and least transparent presidential campaign of the modern era. He emphasized that while money is important in political campaigns, the cost of running a campaign has become quite large with a cost of approximately \$6 billion for the last presidential election reported and 1.8 billion on the House and Senate races. Dr.

Stewart pointed out, however, that money cannot "buy" the election since over \$100 million was spent by self-funded candidates who lost their races for the US Senate. The campaign acts of the 1970's emphasized transparency in campaign finance and imposed limits of contributions from individuals, PACs and parties. In 2002, the *Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act* revised the spending limits and prohibited "soft" money contributions to the parties. It also prohibited any "advocacy ads" paid for by a corporation (including non-profit issue organizations) or paid. Since many 527 groups are not required to register with the Federal Election Commission, this provided a loophole to contributions from these groups as well as no advocacy limitations. This is important because Internet advocacy ads are targeted in certain demographic locations so that everyone does not necessarily see the same ad. Changes in finance reform came again in 2010 when *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* overturned the ban on corporations and unions using money to produce and air campaign political ads but still maintained the ban on corporations making direct contributions to federal candidates. Questionable political organizations have flourished in the wake of the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling. However, that same year *SpeechNow.org v. FEC* led to the SuperPacs in which corporations and unions are viewed as "persons" and can make unlimited contributions to a PAC (political action committee), an organization that campaigns for or against candidates, ballot initiatives or legislation. These decisions led campaign financing away from transparency.

Dr. Stewart pointed out that while Obama and Romney raised almost the same amount of money (\$1.2B versus 1.18B) for their campaigns, Romney spent less on his campaign. Sources of money for the candidates can come from either the national party or from individuals through campaigns. Interestingly, Romney's campaign received a much greater percentage of funding from the SuperPacs than Obama (\$224M versus \$92M). While individual contributions to national parties are limited to \$30,800/year and candidate contributions limited to \$2,500 per election, individuals or corporations can contribute millions to a SuperPac. Dr. Stewart showed us a list of 11 contributors who gave between 3 and 30 million dollars to a SuperPac!

The lack of transparency in campaign financing is evident in the recent elections. A number of interest groups aligned with the candidates are legally not disclosing the identities of their donors to the Federal Election Commission. *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court decision in 2010 opened the door to direct spending on elections by unions and corporations, including nonprofits taking the corporate form. Dr. Stewart told the League that the most complete picture of campaign spending is available by tracking broadcast television ads. According to Dr. Stewart, an excellent Internet source for tracking expenditures is [opensource.org](http://opensource.org). ~Submitted by Sandra Gray

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