

League of Women Voters-- Clemson Area



January 2007

Upcoming Events

Please mark your 2007 calendar to reserve room for exciting and informative LWVCA activities. Together, we can change the world through political action. The images above are from our most recent Wine Tasting at Keowee Country Club. Be active and have some fun too!



League Events

Board Meeting--January 8 at 12:15 at UUFC

General Meeting on Legislative Delegation--January 16 at UUFC; 7:00 Refreshments; 7:30 Meeting

Book Discussion and Potluck--January 27 at UUFC at 12:00.

Board Meeting--February 13 at 12:15 at UUFC

General Meeting on Adult Education--February 20 at UUFC; 7:00 Refreshments; 7:30 Meeting

County Governmental Meetings

Clemson City Council
1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:30 p.m.

Seneca City Council
2nd Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m.

Anderson County Council
1st and 3rd Tuesdays; 6:00 p.m.

Pickens County Council
1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:00 p.m.

Oconee County Council
1st Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m.; 3rd Tuesdays, 3:00 p.m.

Pickens County School Board
4th Mondays, 7:30 p.m. except July and December

Oconee County School Board
2nd and 3rd Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

LWV National Office 202-429-1965
(800-424-2937 for state and local board members)



President's Message

The annual holiday party at my house on December 12th was a fun event as always, great food from

great League cooks, and a nice finale to a full and productive fall. Thanks to Ingrid Lampe for a good wine tasting November 30th, also good food and good company; and to Linda Gahan and her team for arranging an excellent meeting with B.R. Skelton and Larry Martin on property tax relief issues in November.

A new year is always an exciting time for many reasons, but for League it's a new Congress and the start of a new General Assembly session. So it's time to turn our attention from voter service to the other half of active participation in government, which is Responding to Times for Action from national and getting our positions out there in every way we can. Letters to the editor.

PROPOSED LWVSC POSITIONS ON VOTING MACHINES

The following consensus questions will be considered by each local league, with responses due back to Shiela Haney by February 1. A document intended to provide a starting point for discussion will be mailed from State Board very soon after Christmas.

1. Do you agree that random testing of voting machines should be conducted during every election?
2. Do you agree that new and replacement voting machines that are purchased by the state of

South Carolina should have a paper ballot, for the purpose of allowing the voter to verify her/his vote, and, also for use whenever a vote recount is required?

3. Do you agree that the iVotronic voting machine, even with an add-on voter-verified paper trail, is not secure?
4. Should the LWVSC change position (8-1-f) under Electoral Democracy to read "Implementing automated systems of voting from a statewide list approved by SCSEC to standardize voting procedures, lessen voter confusion and

state Leagues. Speaking to the Legislative Delegation meeting on January 15th. Attending Legislative Day in Columbia on February 21st—let's send a carload! Our first ever book discussion event will take place in January, and the title we chose is appropriately about Congress, Mann and Ornstein's *Broken Branch*. Be sure to beg, borrow or buy a copy, or check it out from the Clemson University library so you can read and come prepared to discuss it at the end of January (see article elsewhere in this newsletter). We will also be doing state and local program planning in January and participating in the statewide study of adult education in February.

Happy New Year!
Holley

increase the accuracy of the count. Approved voting machines should meet LWVUS standards for security, accuracy, recountability and accessibility?"

5. Do you agree that source code should be open for inspection?



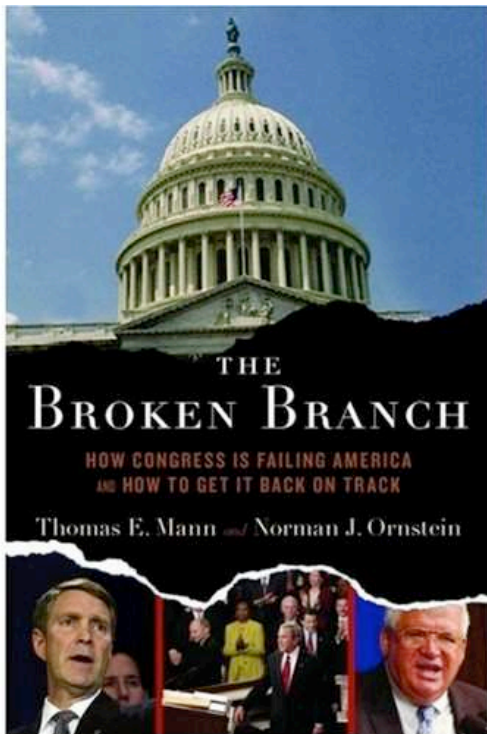
BOOK DISCUSSION & POTLUCK

Saturday, January 27, 2007 at 12 noon

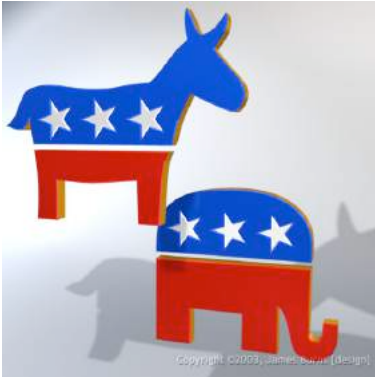
Unitarian Fellowship on Pendleton Road

This is the first time for our LWVCA to hold a book discussion. The idea came from a new board member, Bea Bailey and promises to be a fun and educational event. The book is **“THE BROKEN BRANCH: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get It Back on Track”** by Thomas E. Mann and Norman H. Ornstein. Comments on this book come from Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House and U.S. Senator John McCain among others. From Gingrich, “The Constitution makes the legislative branch Article I. It precedes the presidency and the judiciary by design. Today the legislative branch is too weak, too dysfunctional, and too out of touch with modern times to fulfill its constitutional duties. Mann and Ornstein understand well the glaring gap between the framers’ design and today’s reality. *The Broken Branch* is a serious step toward strengthening the Congress and moving America back toward a more stable and safer system”. From McCain, “Tom Mann and Norm Ornstein have few peers as Congress watchers, but their affection for this very human institution drives their analyses in *The Broken Branch* as much as their experience. You don’t have to agree with every point in their criticism to feel renewed respect for their lifetime of devotion to helping make the people’s branch of government a better functioning and more constructive tribune of the public interest”. We have combined this program with a potluck luncheon. Bring a salad to share and come to a lively discussion of paramount concern.

Linda Gahan



LWV-South Carolina Begins Study of Adult Education in State



The purpose of the Adult Education study is to examine the mission, goals, services, programs, and budgets of adult education, and make recommendations to LWVSC for developing a position on issues related to:

- (1) the adequacy of funding and
- (2) the overall role of adult education in the public education system of South Carolina.

The LWVCA was able to secure responses from the Anderson Adult Education Program representing Districts 1 and 2 and from the Anderson Adult Education Center which represents Anderson School Districts 3, 4, and 5.

Della Baker

MEMBERSHIP

The new membership list for January 2007 is enclosed in this issue of VOTER. We regret that the following members are not renewing their memberships:

Mary Dusenberry
Clara Golay and Ellis Bradford – moved out of state
Shelley Bond Holbrooks
Marguerite Kirsch
Noelle London – to College of Charleston
Katherine McDeed – moved to Greenville
Khyati Nayak – moved out of town
Jenn Robinson

We welcome the following NEW members to the Clemson League:

Chelsea Buscher
Emily Burchfield
Doug and Joan Shier

Please invite friends and neighbors to attend the January Program Planning Meeting to learn about our state program positions and activities. This is a great way to get to know about the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area. Tell Aleta about prospects for membership.

Aleta Robinson, Membership Chair

CANDIDATES FORUMS



Candidates for Oconee County Council at Our November Candidates' Forum.

Check out the snazzy sign. We were definitely there (and running the show).

Clemson Area LWV sponsored five candidates forums for the November 2006 elections and conducted one informational meeting. Thanks to all those who helped: For the Clemson City Council and two at-large seats for Pickens County School Board of Trustees, Edith Hammond was assisted by Alice Flower, Donna London, Aleta Robinson and Eleanor Hare.

In Oconee County there were two forums; one for the Oconee County School Board of Trustees and one for SC House District 1 and the Oconee County Council. Those who helped were: Jane Polk, Charlotte Holmes, Janie Shipley, Cathy Toscano, Charli Bishop, Carol Kozma, and Kathy Woodard.

In Anderson County there was one forum for County Council Candidates and a Voter Information Meeting which was requested by County Councilwoman Gracie Floyd. Elaine Epstein was assisted by Debbie Dorn, Kleo Stathakis and Ada Lou Steirer.

We co-sponsored a forum with the Strom Thurmond Institute, for candidates for State Superintendent of Education. Those who helped from our League were: Holey Ulbrich, Kathy Woodard and Alice Flower. I am sure that these events helped the electorate in the three counties make informed decisions when they voted.

Reggie Turetzky - Voter Service Co-Chair

Personal Reflection

SC Education Oversight Committee Meeting

I was invited, as a representative of LWVCA, to attend the SC Education Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting on October 30, 2006 at the Hamilton Career Center. The EOC is an independent, non-profit agency made up of eighteen members. It was created through the passage of the 1998 Education Accountability Act and has established a goal in which SC student achievement would be ranked in the top half of the states by 2010.

Alex Martin, a member of the Committee, said that SC Schools earn an "A" in Science Standards for 2005 and was one of only nine states that saw improvement. He also said that SC showed an eleven point increase in SAT scores since 2001 and that is the fourth highest increase in the nation since 2000. But, he added that the state's Reading Scores "have been pretty flat and this identified reading as a critical need." There is an EOC initiative, called "Parents and Adults Inspired Reading Success" (PAIRS) which began in 2005 to inspire students to learn to read.

Also there is an achievement gap between White and African-American students, White and Hispanic students and between those who pay for lunch and free and reduced lunch groups. Some experts see the achievement gap as one of the most persistent challenges in the United States. We must raise the achievement of low scoring students while raising over-

all standards. Another concern is the low graduation rate in South Carolina.

Jo Anne Anderson, EOC Executive Director, said that there is one way to clear the obstacles that often block students' chances for academic success and that is through the establishment of "Common Ground" - an initiative developed through some fifty people from both sides of the political spectrum whose goal is to see SC students succeed. The group defined five responsibilities to be fulfilled:

1. Demand that pre-K through College be dedicated to every child succeeding.
2. Place the individual student at the center of education.
3. Respect and foster the role of families.
4. Recruit, develop, reward and retain educators who can guide learning.
5. Provide facilities and technology capabilities that serve the entire community and affirm that education is the cornerstone of the community's strength.

The meeting broke into group sessions. The first task was to name what is taking place in Oconee County to address academic performance. The groups identified Long Range Building Plans, Partnerships with Higher Education, Placement of a Reading Strategies Teachers at each school and Improvement of Teacher Quality. The second task was to address the types of barriers there are for

reaching their goals. The barriers were identified as follows: resistance to change, low percentage of male involvement, marketing of the school district, single parent families, and the difficulty of serving all at-risk pre-schoolers. The final task was to name what the community and individuals could do to address the responsibilities of "Common Ground". The issues included: parent education, increase the number of volunteers, become more flexible and creative, improve communication, the need for more school programs and to support and value diversity. Those present were educators and community leaders that encompassed diverse areas.

Reggie Turetzky



On the Shoulders of Giants....

Another Personal Reflection

On Poll Watching

With a small contingent of poll watchers (Joni and Les Grady, Eleanor Hare, Ellen Magee, Frances Plotnik and Aleta Robinson) and using questions supplied by the Verified Voting Foundation, we observed poll closing after absentee voting at Pickens on November 2, 3, and 6 and poll closing on Election Day at #103 (at East Clemson Baptist Church), Craters Creek II, and Albert R. Lewis precincts.

Tootsie Hayes and Lisa Swords were very helpful to the poll watchers at Pickens, carefully showing us everything they did and answering all our questions. There were two iVotronics set up in the hall outside the elections office. As people presented their ID and signed the voting roster, Lisa Swords entered their names in the computer as having voted and printed a sticker for their sign-in sheet with their name and precinct number. Tootsie Hayes escorted each voter to a computer and entered the correct precinct number. When the polls closed, the number of total votes cast on the iVotronics that day was compared with the number on the sign-in sheet and the Personal Electronic Ballots (PEBs) locked up. The voting machines were left in the hall overnight. (The poll watchers had some concerns about the overnight

security of the voting machines left in the hall, even behind locked doors.)

Those of us who observed at Pickens thought that the Elections Office needed more staff. If a disabled person needed an iVotronic brought to the curbside, there would be only one person left with the machines. In our opinion, there should always be at least two people staying with the voting machines or they should be closed down. Elections workers also need to be able to eat lunch and take an occasional break. The phone also rang frequently. In our opinion, additional people were needed, both to answer the phone and to allow the other workers at least an occasional break.

On Election Day we encountered problems closing down the machines. At Albert R. Lewis precinct, the machines would not close normally. With help from Pickens and a special "trick" override password, they finally convinced the machines to close. At Prater Creek II the poll workers also couldn't close down the machines. They tried many times and, even with phone help from Pickens, could not close the machines. The "trick" override password didn't work this time. Finally, they physically closed the cases and returned the still (electronically) unclosed machines to Pickens. There were no problems at the third precinct observed.

Eleanor Hare



Staying in Touch & Remembering

Aleta Robinson, our Membership Chair, wants to help us stay in touch. Feel free to send personal updates to Aleta. We'll find a place for them in our VOTER. Or, send a picture or two (preferably as a JPEG). Below are some images from last year's events and a few updates on our incredible members.

Maureen Harris, A 25 year member of the Clemson League, moved to North Carolina on December 5th and will sorely be missed by us "old timers." Maureen has served the Clemson LWV in many capacities, including as treasurer and memorably as our Clemson City Council observer for a number of years. She was also on the Election Commission from the Clemson area. You may write to Maureen at:

P.O. Box 16591

Chapel Hill, NC 27516-6591

Her phone is 919-942-2498 _

Ethel Sturgis, also well known by longtime League members, is recovering nicely from her automobile accident and still living in her home in Sumter. Ethel has been on state boards of the Leagues in Texas and South Carolina, has been our "institutional memory" for membership and board training, has written much of our how-to materials, and is dearly loved and respected. A card or letter of encouragement would be appreciated. You may write to Ethel at 535 Sierra Street, Sumter, SC 29150.

Bernie Hilbert, a longtime State Board member and VOTER editor, died suddenly in Columbia earlier this month. A number of our local League members, including Dianne Haselton, Janet Marsh, Holley Ulbrich, Aleta Robinson, and Reggie Turetzky, have had the pleasure of working with Bernie, who was informed and knowledgeable, especially about national program issues, and was always willing to undertake any task that needed attention. Bernie's last act for the League was arranging League Leaders' Day in October.



Linda Gahan Helps Us Reflect on National League Issues.



Steve Johnson Dazzles Audience at *Kilowatt Ours* with Electric Lawn Mower That Reduces Carbon Emissions

General LWVCA Meeting

**Focus On
State Program Planning
January 16, 2007
at Unitarian
Fellowship
7:00 pm – social hour
7:30 – program**

January is the month to consider our LWVSC positions and give recommendations for LWVSC State Programming for 2007-2009 to be adopted at the 2007 LWVSC State Convention. This is every leaguers' opportunity and privilege to have a say in the next two years of LWVSC programming. Come hear what Eleanor Hare recommends for electronic

voting. Remember Eleanor agreed to serve on State Board and chair this study two years ago at the SC Convention in Hartsville. Some of the other members of our LWVSC State Board didn't see it this way. However, progress continues. Jan Marsh will update us on the Child Welfare position. Her concern is that this position should focus on child protection and move other positions in this category like "No Child Left Behind" and daycare to another area. We will talk about this. Charleston has recommended a new study in criminal justice and Aleta Robinson will explain. Positions on natural resources and government and taxation, all pertinent to the time we live, are up for discussion. Come and have your say at the grassroots level.

League of Women Voters--Clemson Area

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