



# THE VOTER

JANUARY 2014 Vol. 41, No 1

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

## Co-President's Message

In the history of South Carolina politics, five women have been elected to the US House of Representatives and none to the Senate. In the history of the state, women have never comprised more than 15% of the state legislature. Does it matter?



What happens when women are elected? What happens when women lead? What happens when women get a voice at the table? The easy answer, the most apparent answer, is that half the population is represented. But that's not all.

A Pew Center study of leadership skills in men and women found that men scored higher than women in decisiveness. But women score higher in leadership traits of honesty, intelligence, compassion and creativity. So, what else happens when women are elected? We build relationships. If I've learned only one thing since joining the League of Women Voters, it is that to have a voice, to get things done, you have to build relationships.

Our leadership corps and the people they lead would benefit greatly by diversifying: Let's add some women to the mix!

Yours in League,

*Paula Appling*

## NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING

The League will hold its annual program-planning meeting in Seneca at Ye Old Sandwich Shoppe (banquet room) on Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, starting at 11 a.m. This year the focus is on national program planning. You will be receiving an email with information about national program to help you think ahead of time about what direction we want to offer the national League, and also to get an approximate head count. We will also be doing local program planning. This meeting is for members only. Be sure to mark your calendars for a good lunch, good company, and a lively discussion as always.

*~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich*

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## THE VOTER

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## UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, January 2	<b>2014 Pickens County Legislative Delegation Annual Public Meeting</b> , Dascusville Community Center, 2671 Earls Bridge Road, Easley, 5:30 pm
Monday, January 6	<b>2014 Oconee County Legislative Delegation Annual Public Meeting</b> , Gignilliat Community Center, 621 N. Townville, St. Seneca, 5:30 pm.
Tuesday, January 14	<b>LWVCA Board Meeting</b> , Clemson Community Room, 5:30 pm.
Tuesday, January 14	<b>Truthful Tuesday</b> , S.C. State House, Columbia, 11:00 am.
Tuesday, January 21	<b>“Ready, Set, Vote”</b> , OLLI, 7:00 pm-social, 7:30 pm-program.
Saturday, February 1	<b>National Program Planning</b> , Ye Olde Sandwich Shoppe, Seneca, 11:00 am
Saturday, February 22	<b>Wine Tasting Fundraiser</b> , Calhoun Bridge Center Auditorium, 6– 8:00 pm.

### JANUARY General Meeting: “READY, SET, VOTE”

On Tuesday, January 21, elections directors from Pickens and Oconee Counties and poll clerk Diana Hancock will address the League on voting issues that make our voting process run smoothly.

Rodney Allen, Executive Director of the Pickens County Elections Commission, and Joy Brooks, Executive Director of the Oconee County Elections Commission, will bring their camera equipment to issue S. C. Voter Registration Cards with photo ID. (The photos will be taken at this meeting and the ID cards will be mailed from the State Elections Commission in Columbia.)

Topics to be addressed include the photo ID requirement, provisional ballots, absentee voting, curb-side voting, Election Day waiting times and poll worker training.

Photo IDs will be taken from 7 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and after the meeting. Coffee and conversation start at 7 p.m. and program begins at 7:30 p.m.

The public is invited.

~Submitted by Eleanor Hare

### TRUTHFUL TUESDAY

**“Truthful Tuesday”**

**January 14, 2014**

*Join us at the State House to speak truth to power.*

SC is among states with the lowest citizen taxes in the country. We also have some of the most generous tax breaks. Yet lawmakers claim that the state is too broke to fund core services.

#### **Expand Medicaid**

In 2014, some 1,300 South Carolinians will die needlessly because of our state’s refusal to use our federal tax dollars to expand Medicaid coverage to our most vulnerable citizens. Our lawmakers claim we can’t afford to pay the 10% in matching funds required to get federal funding in 2020. The first three years of federal funding were free, with no state match. The state gave up \$1.4 billion in 2014 to expand Medicaid coverage to over 200,000 people living on less than \$250 a week who can’t afford insurance. A 10% match of the money we gave up could be covered, just by adjusting the \$300 sales tax cap on luxury cars, yachts and planes. Yet lawmakers claim that the state is too broke to fund Medicaid expansion.

#### **Fund Education**

K-12 funding this year was \$495 million below what is required by state law. State support for higher education funding is 40% less than it was in 2002. Tuition at our state supported colleges is the seventh highest in the nation, nearly twice that of Georgia and North Carolina. South Carolina ranks 48th in the percentage of state funding for Higher Ed, with less than 12% of our schools’ annual budgets coming from state funding. *Continued on page 3*

## TAKE ACTION ON ETHICS LEGISLATION

## TRUTHFUL TUESDAY continued

It is only a few weeks before legislators return to Columbia for the 2014 legislative session on January 14. When they do, ethics will be one of the first things on the Senate calendar. It is very important that you, their constituents, reach out to legislators BEFORE the session begins. We are asking that you call them or meet with them. If you can't do either of those, please write to them, by regular mail. The message that we need to send is simple. Tell them that you want ethics reform that fully discloses the incomes of public officials so that possible conflicts of interest are disclosed. Tell them that you support independent investigation of complaints. The League of Women Voters supports the provisions of the working group amendment to the bill H.3945 that is now in interrupted debate in the Senate, which addresses these issues.

We hope that all of you will take a few minutes from your busy holiday schedule to do this. It is much better to reach out before legislators are embroiled in the busy work of a new session, and the calendar of the Senate gives us no leeway. Remember that you need to use legislators' phones and addresses at home in their legislative districts since the General Assembly is out of session. Those are available at <http://www.scstatehouse.gov>. Just go to "Find your Legislators" and fill in the blanks, or if you already know the name of your senator and representative, click on "Senators" under "Senate" or "Representatives" under "House of Representatives." The numbers posted there are the ones that they intend for the public to have, so please don't hesitate to use them.

Thank you for your help with this important effort, and thank you for all that you do.

**JoAnne Day**, Co-President, LWVSC, [jvday@yahoo.com](mailto:jvday@yahoo.com)

**Lynn Teague**, VP for Issues and Action, LWVSC, [teague\\_l@bellsouth.net](mailto:teague_l@bellsouth.net)

**Fund Education**

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**Protect Voting Rights**

Nearly half our state's voting age population does not vote. The US ranks 138th in the world in terms of voter participation. SC has the least competitive elections in the US, with 80 percent of lawmakers facing no major opposition in general elections. Instead of trying to make voting easier and more representative, SC political leaders keep trying to make it harder and less democratic. We cannot allow voting rights to be further eroded.

**Join Us**

Join us at the State House at 11:00 on Tuesday, January 14, the first day of the legislative session, in a peaceful show of moral outrage. We will speak truth to power. We can no longer ignore the basic needs of the citizens of this state.

**The Truthful Tuesday Coalition**

SC Progressive Network <http://www.scpronet.com/>

SC NAACP <http://scnaacp.org/>

SC Christian Action Council <http://www.sccouncil.net/>

**IN MEMORIAM: Dr. Mary T. Kelly** has been one of the LWVSC's staunchest advocates over some four decades from the 1970s well into the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An indefatigable watchdog of the state nuclear energy development, her education specialty in chemistry (Ph.D.) prepared her to understand and be wary of the industry's initial unregulated expansion in South Carolina.

Observing, speaking and testifying, writing, and participating in citizen advisory groups, she became a prodigious advocate of nuclear regulation and the public's need for information and oversight. Mary's dogged persistence earned her the South Carolina Wildlife Federation's recognition as a Conservationist of the Year in 1985. As a Columbia Area League member, she also served the state as a board member (Vice President, Natural Resources and Energy Chairs), and President from 1985-1987 and again completing a 1989-1993 term as Co-president.

In representative quotes, Mary Kelly writes in 1989, "Again let me emphasize that on the stage of this small state the nuclear scenario has been playing for a long time." From the League history, Proud Heritage, Mary is quoted as encouraging future League leaders of the necessity for "sometimes long and agonizingly slow hacking away by which League does manage to effect changes for the better in the governmental process...It is this persistent effort that to me typifies the League and makes me feel that my small contribution is so worthwhile."

Mary Kelly is indeed deserving of the LWVSC Spirit of Democracy award as a leader who made no small contribution to the citizens of South Carolina and the southeastern region.

## STATEMENT TO PICKENS COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

January 2, 2014

Holley H. Ulbrich, Vice President for Program and Action for the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

Thank you for this opportunity to share some of our concerns with you before the new legislative session begins. The League is following a number of issues, including government reorganization. Some of them involve good process while others call for good outcomes. The League believes in both, but we are particularly concerned that the process of legislation and regulation be open, transparent, and not beholden to special interests. So the two issues I want to address today are ethics reform and landfill management.

When a few, or perhaps more than a few, legislators misuse campaign money, fail to disclose their income sources and vote on matters from which they should recuse themselves, when we have the ethics scandals that South Carolina has undergone in the last two decades, when legislators respond to ethics complaints by covering them up or slapping wrists, people become distrustful of government. The stigma that belongs to a minority of legislators is spread to all of them. We can restore faith in government by having greater accountability and transparency in state government. We believe that H. 3945, still in the Senate on interrupted date, is a promising start on restoring trust between our citizens and their legislators, and we urge you to support its passage.

The second issue is overriding the authority of county governments to decide what waste to accept in the light of their citizens' needs and the cost of creating additional landfill space. H. 3290 / S. 203 prohibits any ordinance which "directs the flow of waste." We believe that the excessive amount of out-of-state waste landing in South Carolina is not the kind of industry we want to attract or the kind of image we want to create. We also believe it is a blatant attack on home rule, particularly when solid waste management is one of the specific functions delegated to local government in the state constitution. We understand that some legislators have been heavily influenced by large waste management companies from out of state in forcing counties to accept more out-of-state waste, which will shorten the lifetime of their landfills. Large waste management companies are interested in profits for their stockholders and do not create much of anything in South Carolina other than road hazards in transportation and unpleasant aromas in the area surrounding the landfill. County government is interested in meeting the long-term waste disposal needs of its residents at minimum cost and diversion of increasingly valuable land to solid waste disposal. We citizens see our local officials on a daily basis, and can remind them when we think they are not doing what we elected them to do. But we have no influence over more than 98% of the General Assembly, because we each get to vote for only two of its 170 members. So we rely on you, our legislative delegation, to carry our concerns to your colleagues and urge them to do the right thing and leave solid waste disposal firmly in the hands of local governments.

Thank you for all that you do for Pickens County, and for the state of South Carolina.

**Anita Bearden is our newest League member.** She is a native of Oconee County and lives in downtown Seneca in a small cottage with a 14-year-old feline named Spunky the Wonder Cat (rescued as a kitten). Anita is an avid user and advocate of public transportation, and you may see her riding the CAT bus around Seneca to do her shopping or over to Clemson to visit with friends or eat out.

Her interests are varied, but she loves reading including a variety of nonfiction and historical fiction. She is an active member in St. Mark United Methodist Church in Seneca and volunteers in community projects as needed.

Anita is a graduate of Seneca High School, the University of Georgia (BA, Psychology), Pennsylvania State University (MA, Journalism) and the Poynter Institute of Media Studies and Newspaper Management (St. Petersburg, FL). She reports her most important training, and the one ongoing, is in the "School of Hard Knocks"! Throughout her eclectic and interesting career, Anita has made a living working at a variety of jobs in journalism, sales, social welfare and education, working in Athens, GA; Darien, GA; Callahan, FL; State College, PA, and Pendleton, SC.

We welcome Anita into the Clemson Area League of Women Voters and look forward to working with her!

*~Submitted by Sandra Gray*

**ADVOCACY with LYNN TEAGUE**

**PROJECT XX-SC**



Lynn Teague, LWV-SC Vice President for Issues and Action, met with 10 League members on December 13 to discuss the prospects for passing ethics

legislation this session of the SC Legislature. She said that H3945 is the strongest bill that has any chance of passing and encouraged us to support it.

Lynn discussed other legislation of interest to the League, including H3290/S203, the so-called "Business Freedom to Choose Act," which is opposed by the League, the SC Association of Counties, the Sierra Club and others. She suggested that we visit DontDumpOnSC.com for more information.

That afternoon, Lynn, Paula Appling and Eleanor Hare met with Senator Larry Martin to obtain his views on the possibility of passing ethics legislation.

*~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

**Project XX South Carolina** is a nonpartisan, nonprofit advocacy and education organization formed in 2013 to address and alleviate the unacceptable gender imbalance in our state's political system. Our focus is on researching and reporting on the lack of women in public office and in shedding light on the cronyism and backdoor deals that persist in keeping women shut out of the political process. To make running for office less daunting, we provide resources to assist women who are considering running for office, and we will devote a great deal of our future efforts on involving a younger generation of women in the South Carolina political process.

**CALL TO ACTION (GINNY DEERIN):**

There are 62 college and university board seats open offering many great opportunities for women to serve. Step up and apply yourself or encourage others to do so. Please share information ASAP. Time is short – especially given the holiday season. Very short letter of intent due by 5 pm Friday, Jan 3.

**FOR FULL INFORMATION**

[http://www.projectxxsc.com/2014\\_college\\_boards](http://www.projectxxsc.com/2014_college_boards)

The General Assembly College and University Trustee Screening Commission is accepting letters of intent **due January 3, 2014** for seats on these boards:

*(organized best to worst for representation by women)*

- College of Charleston (45% women)
- Winthrop University (43% women)
- Lander University (41% women)
- SC State (33%)
- Clemson University (15% women)
- The Citadel (14% women)
- Medical University of SC (12%)
- Francis Marion University (11% women)
- University of South Carolina (10% women)
- Coastal Carolina (6% women)
- [Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School](#) (Board information not available at this time.)

*~Submitted Paula Appling*

**NOVEMBER 19: JUAN GILBERT REPORT**



On November 19, nationally recognized voting technology expert Dr. Juan Gilbert, accompanied by some of his graduate students, presented an overview of his research to LWV-CA.

Dr. Gilbert focused his presentation on the Prime III, an open-source software system that provides voting capability on

commonly available tablets and printers. Much of Dr. Gilbert's research has involved improving the voting experience for those with disabilities. One of the strengths of the Prime III is that all voters, including those with disabilities, use the same equipment.

His presentation included research into using technology to shorten wait times, to accurately identify voters and to achieve secure and private overseas voting.

*~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*



**HOLIDAY PARTY- BOB FENNELL & MATT LAIEWSKI**

**SC HOSPITALS LOSE MILLIONS DUE TO FAILURE TO EXPAND MEDICAID**

Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funding to South Carolina was scheduled to be reduced by \$13.7 million in 2014<sup>1,2</sup>, but provisions of the 2014 Budget Bill have postponed the first reduction until Oct. 1, 2015<sup>3</sup>. The shift in cuts means that in 2016 hospitals will face double the DSH reductions. The Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services will update DSH guidelines early in 2014.

The total reduction for South Carolina in years 2014 – 2022 is expected to be about \$700 million. Total cuts from 2014 to 2020 for AnMed Health are estimated at \$67,191,593 and to Oconee Memorial Hospital at \$31,282,865<sup>4</sup>.

DSH Medicaid funds are paid to the states to reimburse hospitals for services provided to uninsured patients. As part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), health care providers agreed to a decrease in DSH funding in return for an increase in the number of patients who would be covered by Medicaid, thus decreasing the number of uninsured patients. The source of hospital reimbursement was changed from DSH to Medicaid.

But, Medicaid wasn't expanded in South Carolina and the hospitals are now facing a major funding problem.

The public sector, health organizations, health insurance companies, charities and charitable donations usually fund hospitals. They cannot operate at a loss. Federal law requires that anyone coming to an emergency department be stabilized and treated, regardless of their citizenship, insurance status or ability to pay. As a result, expensive emergency room treatment has become the de facto national health care policy for the uninsured<sup>5</sup>.

Paying for health care services for the uninsured is already built into premiums for private insurance. In 2005, Families USA found that health insurance premiums in California for a family with private, employer-sponsored coverage were \$1,160 higher due to health care for the uninsured<sup>6</sup>.

Lost funding must be replaced. Several hospitals have said that "cost-shifting" is their only recourse in the short term<sup>7</sup>. "Cost-shifting" means that the burden is moved from those who can't pay (uninsured) to those who can (insured). There is also recognition that "cost-shifting" cannot be increased very much because of the burden already falling on the insured.

In the last four years there has been a surge in the number of hospital mergers<sup>8</sup>. Reduction of DSH funding is expected to cause more mergers and, unfortunately, some closing of hospitals. Other options for dealing with reduced funding include firing employees or decreasing employee pay. Some hospitals may decrease services. An analysis published by the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors<sup>9</sup> calls failure to participate in the Medicaid expansion at the same time their DSH funds are reduced a "perfect storm."

Failure to expand Medicaid not only prevents those below the poverty level from receiving adequate medical care. It reduces funding to our hospitals that may result in increased premiums for private insurance and decreased hospital services.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.chausa.org/docs/default-source/advocacy/051613-summary-of-proposed-medicaid-dsh-rule.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.nejm.org/doi/suppl/10.1056/NEJMp1310572/suppl\\_file/nejmp1310572\\_appendix.pdf](http://www.nejm.org/doi/suppl/10.1056/NEJMp1310572/suppl_file/nejmp1310572_appendix.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.beckershospitalreview.com/racs/-/icd-9/-/icd-10/president-obama-signs-2014-budget-bill-what-it-means-for-hospitals.html>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.scdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ME\\_ACACuts\\_13.pdf](http://www.scdp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/ME_ACACuts_13.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.acep.org/content.aspx?id=25936>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.familiesusa.org/resources/publications/fact-sheets/the-added-cost-of-care-for-Uninsured-in-California.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.gsabusiness.com/news/49577-lost-medicaid-money-could-cost-s-c-hospitals-patients?rss=0>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/08/13/business/A-Wave-of-Hospital-Mergers.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/08/13/business/A-Wave-of-Hospital-Mergers.html?_r=0)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.nasmhpd.org/docs/publications/TheDSHInterplay04\\_26\\_13WebsiteFINAL.pdf](http://www.nasmhpd.org/docs/publications/TheDSHInterplay04_26_13WebsiteFINAL.pdf)

~Submitted by Eleanor Hare



**2013 HOLIDAY PARTY**

## **A Successful Advocacy Story: A Preventive Intervention in Seneca's Adams Subdivision**

Many members of my family, including my sister, cousins, aunts and uncles, have lived in Adams Subdivision, the oldest planned community in the quiet little town of Seneca, for many years. Ploma Adams developed this subdivision in the late 1950's and 1960's after her husband, John Quincy Adams, passed away. The property had been a large farm and was designated in 1938 by the US Soil and Water Conservation as the First Soil Conservation District Plan in the United States. A plaque with this designation still stands in the yard of the quaint, original stone farmhouse, visible as you enter the subdivision on Ploma Drive. Mrs. Adams designed the neighborhood in keeping with this conservation plan and to be what she considered "the ideal quiet community in which to raise a family." She donated land for two churches, an elementary school and a playground within the development. The neighborhood has recently seen a resurgence of new families with young children move in, a second generation in many cases since some of these new residents had grown up there as children themselves during the 1970's and 1980's.

On October 30, 2013, an announcement from the Seneca City Council threatened to shatter Mrs. Adams picturesque vision for this neighborhood. A contract had been signed with Hogan Construction and the Seneca Light and Water Department planned to move all its operations to the Kellett School property in the Adams Subdivision. Three years earlier, Oconee County deeded the eleven acre plot where the school and playground was to the City of Seneca after the school moved to a new building. Construction was to begin the next Monday, less than a week away. The residents of Seneca had been led to believe over the previous few months that the city planned to renovate the old school building into municipal offices. However, architectural drawings showed their actual intent was to create an industrial complex, constructing two large metal structures, concreting over the playground, and moving the entire operation to the property. This meant storage and operation of large bucket trucks, heavy equipment, transformers, light poles and other industrial type equipment, all to be located in the midst of a quiet neighborhood! The plans included destroying Kapp Field, the oldest Little League baseball field in SC, as well as cutting down an old growth pine forest that served not only as a recreation area and home to nesting hawks and eagles, but as a buffer to the homes that bordered the school property. In place of the trees would be a storage area for contaminated soil and a 160' long detention pond to catch the runoff from the concreted area. It was too much for us to accept.

We began calling our city council members and the mayor to find out if this were really true. After all, this area was designated residential, not commercial. The council members told us "the City of Seneca owns the land now and doesn't have to abide by any zoning. We can build what we want to." Everyone we spoke with said the contract was signed, and the city will not back down.

Wow, that statement brought us to action, and my League of Women Voters training kicked in. What would the League do? With the encouragement of co-president Paula Appling and the advice of seasoned League member and fellow Senecanian Reggie Turetzky, we began our intervention. Following the example of League member Eleanor Hare who was leading an intervention plan with the Pickens County School Board, we composed a letter explaining what the city was planning and then circulated the letter and a petition door-to-door in the neighborhood requesting the City "halt construction in the green area behind the Kellett School". Contrary to what the city officials told the press, not a single person we spoke with in the neighborhood had any previous knowledge of the city's plans. I noticed over the weekend that heavy equipment was brought onto the school property near the wooded area. Early Monday morning, I drove by and saw a tree cutter's truck parked by the equipment. I called my friend and asked her in jest "Do you want to get arrested with me this morning"; we were serious, though, about saving the trees. I grabbed another neighbor walking around the block and soon had several people there to stand in the way of the worker and his heavy equipment. He didn't want to run us over, so he called his boss who then called the City. Soon after, he told us his boss called and said the city told him to stop and go home. The local radio station called to ask what was going on, and I told them we had not been informed about the city's intentions, and we needed "a conversation with the city". We didn't leave the property for fear someone would come back, but by 3 pm that, the city had organized a meeting at the school building with the builder, architects, municipal department heads, etc. to tell the neighborhood what a "wonderful addition" this would be to our neighborhood.

The more we heard, the more we knew this was not what we wanted in Adams Subdivision. They would be destroying our green space, and that did not fit into the wishes of the woman who donated the land 60 years ago for educational and recreational purposes. Moreover, the city never asked for input from anyone in the community about their plans. The 65 community residents that showed up for this impromptu meeting expressed their disbelief that this was happening in their neighborhood. Three days later, we organized a forum at the local church in the League format. More than 125 residents attended to ask questions, but only the Mayor pro tem and city attorney showed up to represent the City. The residents were angry, but the written question and moderator format worked well. The forum worked as it should, and publicity from local newspapers and radio served to educate the rest of the community about what the City had planned for this historic neighborhood. Continued on Page 8

## A Successful Advocacy Story continues

The Light and Water Department wanted to work something out with the neighborhood that would allow them to still build their facility but add some features that would appease the community. The following week the neighborhood organized into a cohesive unit, meeting in small groups and then larger groups to discuss the next action. The city council regular meeting was the second Tuesday of November, and we wanted to be ready. We asked several residents to speak at the Council meeting first and cover the complaints we had, including the historical aspect, the noise and pollution, the loss of our green space, a decline in property values and mostly how inappropriate such a facility would be in a neighborhood. There were legal issues, too. We didn't feel the city had completed all the necessary impact studies or notified the residents in a timely manner. That night 16 residents had 5 minutes each to express their disapproval of this 4.2 million dollar project in their neighborhood. The Council listened patiently and then agreed to put the project on hold until the January council meeting. They voted to form a committee of 6 residents and 6 city employees to come to a resolution on how the property was to be used.

The following week our community met again and formed a committee of 6 residents and 3 alternates, each with a different expertise. I served as the ex officio chair. During the following few days we discussed possible uses for the property and all agreed that the green space should remain intact as a low impact park area and the trees should stay. Renovation of the 80,000 square foot building, we felt, was really out of our purview but could suggest potential uses that would be suitable to the neighborhood. The following week, the committee met with the City to discuss possible uses of the property. After an hour of discussion, the head of the Light and Water Department suggested we see how we could incorporate some of these ideas into the design of their facility. They still didn't get it! The basic issue was not what we wanted, but what we didn't want. We called them out on this suggestion during the meeting, and again the media picked up on the bait and switch technique being used. The following day the editorial in the local paper chastised the City for not making their intentions clear. Thanks to the news coverage, we were gaining support for our movement throughout the community of Seneca.

A Council planning session was held the following week, and residents filled the council chambers again. Although the only mention of the project was a report by one of the city's committee members that the committees had jointly met and were coming up with ideas, being at the meeting allowed us to talk informally with the council members after the meeting to vent our concerns. We could feel some of the council members leaning toward us in support. The following Monday, the committee met again with the City for a walking tour of the old Kellett School followed by a discussion about some of the previously identified potential uses for the property. At this time, the department head of Light and Water told us that construction of their facility at that site was off the table. We were cautiously optimistic but felt we needed to hear this from the ones in charge, our city council and mayor. The next day, December 10, the Council had its regularly scheduled meeting and again our neighborhood packed the room. At this time, our mayor announced they were no longer planning to construct the Light and Water Facility on the Kellett property! It was decided that the committees would continue to meet and give a report back to Council at the March meeting on how the property could best be used.

The 6-week battle was over and democracy had won. The people spoke and their elected officials listened. This process is an example of preventive intervention, something Leagues all over our country do to educate people on the issues and to stand up for the rights of all people. Although this was not a local League issue, we used a League of Woman Voters format in our approach, and it worked beautifully. Lessons can be learned from this endeavor. First, municipal officials need to be transparent in their plans when such plans impact their voting constituency in a manner that causes such discourse. Our government was not transparent when neither the media nor the residents realized what they were planning. It would have saved the City significant money. Second, as voting citizens, we need to be more attentive to the public council meetings where issues that affect our daily lives are discussed. Regular attendance to local city and county meetings is something the League strongly recommends. Had we been attending these meetings, perhaps something would have been said that led us to question our officials about this project in a public arena where they would have been obligated to elaborate.

You may have wondered why so many of my family members live in the Adams Subdivision. It is because Ploma Adams was our great-aunt, and, having no children of her own, gave us all property on her beloved farm. She did this with the hope that we would also settle on this family land and look after her beloved ideal community. Thus it was, Aunt Ploma, and is.

*~Submitted by Sandra Gray*

**The Clemson Planning Commission will begin work on its 2024 Comprehensive Plan in January. Public input is needed on various elements of the Plan. Sign up at: [www.cityofclemson.org](http://www.cityofclemson.org). The city is also looking for residents to fill boards and commissions. Fill out an application.**



## A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

This is the time we often reflect on the past and make resolutions for the future. My resolution, which I actually began implementing in the fall of the year, resulted from a trip I made to the Peruvian Amazon in August of this year. Seeing how the native Peruvians lived on a day-to-day basis, seeing what they lived without and what they treasured most caused me to rethink my priorities. These are happy contented people who live uncomplicated lives, using the resources around them for most of their housing, nutritional and medicinal needs. I, too, resolved to live a less complicated, cluttered life and have since discovered that finding homes for my lifelong collection of stuff was more difficult than I ever imagined. Much ended up in the dump.

This is important for more reasons than personal choices. Our love affair with consumerism is polluting the earth! Florida may be the "playground" of the South, but South Carolina is earning the untenable title of "dumping ground" of the South. Recent legislation for the so called Flow Control bill would allow private waste management companies such as Waste Management out of Texas and Republic Services from Arizona to open and manage private landfills throughout South Carolina. This legislation would take control of waste management out of the hands of local county authorities and the residents. Why is this bad for South Carolina? These private companies are for-profit businesses and are taking waste from states such as New Jersey and New York and dumping it into landfills in South Carolina. Last year alone 600,000 tons of waste from outside our state was dumped into landfills in the eastern region of SC. Polluting our soils with unregulated dumping of unknown waste products by private companies could have long lasting environmental consequences in our State.

As another example, the Savannah River Plant Site is a site for radioactive waste storage from its own production as well as from power plants worldwide. Whether you are for or against using nuclear power to generate our need for electricity, the issue still exists as to what to do with the radioactive waste, the spent fuel, which has already been and will continue to be generated. There are dangerous stockpiles of radioactive plutonium already being stored at the Savannah plant. The LWVSC joined with other groups in the State supporting the Savannah River Sites Citizen Advisory Board to adopt a formal position against bringing spent nuclear fuel to the Site from around the world for "consolidated storage". Since the defunding in 2011 of the Yucca Mountain site in Arizona, there are no permanent geologic depositories for nuclear waste in existence. Some plutonium, uranium and other radioactive isotopes can have very long half-life. Our descendants will be dealing with this waste for millennia to come. The waste from the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident has already resulted in spikes of thyroid cancers in children surrounding the area as well as in Americans who came to the rescue after the tsunami.

Even though much of the radioactive wastewater is now contained, methods for the disposal of this toxic water are still unresolved.

The consequences of the waste we are producing are dire. Our earth is like the nutrient-rich flask of bacteria I learned about many years ago in biology class. We were instructed to take samples from the flask over a several-day period and count the numbers of bacteria we found in each sample. We found the numbers of bacteria increased over time until it reached a plateau. After that point, there was a steady decline in the numbers of living bacteria in the flask. Graphing these bacteria numbers over time resulted in the typical bell shaped curve. The bacteria had a finite space to exist in and no way to get rid of the waste they produced from the increasing numbers of bacteria in the flask. They literally poisoned themselves with their own waste. Is this what we are doing with earth, the finite space that we live in? Perhaps a resolution to adopt a "less is best" life style will help to decrease the waste we produce and preserve the green spaces on this planet we call home.

*~Submitted by Sandra Gray*

### ***LWVUS AGRICULTURE STUDY UPDATE***

**SCOPE:** The Agriculture Update will focus narrowly on: 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process.

**COMMITTEE:** Norman Turrill-Chair Oregon, Margaret Chasson-Maryland, :omda Hoff-Michigan, Valerie Kelly-Maine, and Carol Kuniholm-Pennsylvania.

#### **TIMELINE:**

Oct. 2012 - Board approves initial study scope, timeline, and consensus criteria.

Jan. 2013 - Study Committee begins meeting, reviews study scope and timeline and makes recommendations to Board.

Feb-Dec. 2013 - Study Committee prepares or selects study materials, a Leader's Guide and posts website.

Feb-April 2014 – State and local leagues may form study committees, examine study materials, hold public meetings

Nov. 2013 – Study committee proposed consensus questions to the Education Fund Committee

Jan-April 1, 2014 – State and local leagues hold consensus meetings. April 4 is deadline for consensus reports.

April 2014 – Member Agreement Committee decides if consensus was reached and proposes new position statement

May 2014 – Consensus result or new position state is announced before Convention.

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