



# LEAGUE LINES

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[www.lwvcolumbiasc.org](http://www.lwvcolumbiasc.org)

Editor Suzanne Rhodes / Co-editor Sej Harman

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May 2012

## CALENDAR & NEWS

### MAY

**1** (Tu) Conservation Lobby Day

**8** (Tu) Columbia City Council  
(see President's column, p. 2)

**14** (M) Annual Meeting   
Grecian Gardens

### JUNE

June 8-12, 2012 – LWV National Convention – Washington, DC

**25** (M) Purple Martin Cruise - Fundraiser (see p. 5)

## ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, May 14, 5:30 PM

Grecian Gardens

(Hwy. 378 near Lexington Medical Center)

### Brief Business Meeting

(check packet of materials you'll receive by mail)

- Adoption of Officers/Directors (see slate, below)
- Adoption of Budget (see separate ATTACHMENT to email)
- Consideration of Revised Bylaws  
....then we'll SOAR...

**Socialize, Organize, Advocate, Rejoice**

Reservations preferred:

**Susan B James at [sc.rr.com](http://sc.rr.com) or 256-6822**

## PROPOSED SLATE FOR 2012-2013

### Proposed for Term 2012-2014

Position	Proposed (term: 2012-2014)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Sally Huguley
Treasurer	Pat Davy
Secretary	Martha Roblee
Director	Sej Harman
Director	Marzi Knight
Director	Penny Blachman
_____	Nominating Committee, Chair
_____	Nominating Committee
_____	Nominating Committee

### Continuing Board Members

Position	Name	Term
President	Rita Paul	2011-2013
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	JoAnne Day	2011-2013
Director	Pat Forbis	2011-2013
Director	Sarah Leverette	2011-2013

Submitted by:

**Nominating Committee:** Pam Craig – Chair ; Carolyn Hudson, Jan Urban, Janie White

**2011-2012 Board:** President - Rita Paul; 1<sup>st</sup> VP - JoAnne Day (Legislative Action); Treasurer - Janie White; Secretary - Pat Davy; Directors - Pam Craig (Membership); Richie Douglas, Pat Forbis, Sarah Leverette (State Liaison), Carol Medich (Voter Services); Lynn Teague. **Nominating Committee (2011-2012):** Pam Craig, Jan Urban. **Off-Board:** Website - Teri Evans; Environmental Affairs - Chester Sansbury; *League Lines* - Suzanne Rhodes (Editor); Communications/Membership - Sej Harman; Telephone Tree - Keller Barron; Public Transit - Lill Mood; Reservations - Susan James.

**The Prez Says...****Rita Paul**

Don't be fooled that our League work is winding down for the summer! Although we will certainly slow down a bit, there is lots happening right now and some work to pay attention to over the summer months.

Thanks to **Lil Mood**, for our wonderful speaker at the April Public Policy luncheon. **Bob Schneider, Executive Director of CMRTA** gave us a wonderful update, including recent changes and his vision for the future of our transit system.

For those of you able to attend **League Council on April 14**, you know what an exciting day it was! If you were unable to make it you can review the Workbook, including the Board Report, at <http://lwvsc.org/countil2012.html>.

We had 15 members present on **April 24**, for our consensus meeting on the Privatization study. Many, many thanks to our own state representative on the national study committee, **Ted Volskay**, for driving to Columbia from the upstate to meet with us and assist in increasing our knowledge about this important work. Special thanks as well to **Keller Baron** for facilitating our discussion. Our responses have been filed with national. Stay tuned for more on this important study after the national convention in June.

You may have followed some interesting news around the city with regard to the recent Columbia City Council debate around changing the city elections from April to November as well as the possibility of some discussion around changing our form of city government. While the current discussion is not about WHAT form the city government should take, it is about the possibility of a referendum on the November ballot to ask citizens if they believe this needs to be looked at. This, of course, gets at the heart of one of our key principals—**citizen education and input!** We anticipate City Council's discussing this further on **May 8<sup>th</sup>** and are waiting for that confirmation and, it is hoped, the opportunity to be involved. Once again, stay tuned. It may be short notice, but our membership will be notified.

Please, please plan to attend our **Annual Meeting on May 14**, beginning at 5:30 at Grecian Gardens in West Columbia. See details and address in the calendar section of this edition (**p. 1**). We will be voting on our slate of officers and your new budget. You will be further updated on many of the events of the last year, including those in this edition of *League Lines*. This is your opportunity for voting, discussion and input going forward. **Janie White** will be mailing you a packet for the Annual Meeting with information about the new board candidates and proposed new Bylaws, so that part of the meeting will be brief. I cannot emphasize enough that this is YOUR League. Please try to attend.

*Rita*

**ACT on it!** Continue to keep in contact with your elected officials on issues you care about!



**It's still on its way!** **The SURVEY** about *League Lines* and other communications (website; alerts, etc.) will be coming to an Email box near you within the next week. We'll be asking about **CONTENT** (types of articles, columns; length of items; additional materials / links), **FORMAT** (for readability and quick reference), **FREQUENCY** (how often should we publish; how far in advance), **DELIVERY** method (electronic; email; website). And **MORE**. We want to make *League Lines*, the website, and other communications vehicles pertinent, efficient, and something YOU look forward to!

**Once you complete the Survey, BRING IT WITH YOU TO THE ANNUAL MEETING or return by email. We're looking forward to YOUR input!**

## VOTER SERVICE

### VOTER REGISTRATION ACTIVITIES CONTINUE

The Columbia League is continuing to register voters at area high schools. Activities for April included the following:

**April 3:** Airport High School where 10 students were registered. League members participating included *Gladys Coles, Elaine Cooper, Susan James, and Carol Medich*. Most of the seniors at Airport HS had registered to vote in their Government class.

**April 12:** Irmo High School where 25 students were registered. League members participating included *Pat Davy, Horace Holloman, Jane McGregor, and Carol Medich*. Again, most of the seniors had registered in their Government class.

**April 23:** White Knoll High School where 41 students were registered. League members participating included *Keller Barron, Hayes Mizell, and Carol Medich*.

A big thank you goes out to *Keller Barron* for contacting these schools and making appropriate arrangements with the school administrations.



Students registering at White Knoll High School, with the help of League member Hayes Mizell.

**FYI** – Important trivia: **Students can vote** in the primary in June if they are registered and 18 years old by November 6.

**Carol Medich**

**Learn More League!**

**National  
State  
Columbia**

[www.lwv.org/](http://www.lwv.org/)  
[http://lwvsc.org/](http://www.lwvsc.org/)  
[www.lwvcolumbiasc.org](http://www.lwvcolumbiasc.org/)

## April Policy Luncheon Recap

“Let’s go somewhere” seems to be the motto of **Bob Schneider**, the Executive Director of the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority—better known as the CMRTA. The best thing about him is how much he loves his job. Lill Mood, whom we all know is our transportation guru, introduced him. Please review your *April League Lines* for a brief description of his credentials and background.

Bob, at seventeen, did advocacy with the League. It is obvious we taught him well because he is still doing advocacy for the CMRTA. Over the years he has learned that there is a blend between private and public and that we must learn how to *combine* so that we all benefit. He is an employee of *Veolia Transportation, the contract operator of CMRTA, and* serves at the will of the CMRTA board of directors, so balancing the two is a true challenge, and he seems to be delighted by it. He used the treatment of a dialysis patient as an example of the *interdependence of public and private* entities. The patient needs the facility (often private) to perform the task, but *public* transportation to get there.

Some points he made about transit *authorities* were that *RTAs are authorized by State law and in SC there can be no unions of public sector employees*. Veolia employees are union members. 93% of the cash is first generation, meaning that it is spent on drivers and maintenance, which are basic costs. The system has 27 buses operating during peak service. To reduce the deficit by 40% in the present funding, the cuts in service were made in *ways* that affected only 15% of the riders.

*Dr. Schneider emphasized that even 15% of over 2 million rides a year are too many lives that are impacted by loss of service.*

The original board consisted of 35 or more members and that *was not a workable structure*. The present board is eleven members, *all of whom are invested in an excellent transit system for our area and knowledgeable about business decisions*.

Bob stated that *public transportation is one of the basic pillars of a sustainable community. For our system to truly serve the entire population, one essential element is the frequency of service. We don't have the funding right now for frequency that would attract riders who have a choice, so he is focusing on reliability and safety, two other essential markers of a good system. With stability in funding we can begin to build the transit system to one our community needs and deserves.*

**Pam Craig**

## “LA (non) Confidential”....a short summary of **Legislative Action**

By Lynn Teague

The LWVSC has followed 21 bills (some with companion bills in both houses) this year. The League and its partners successfully opposed prohibitive restrictions on **voter registration** drives, and attempts to put burdensome documentation requirements on voter registration also appear to have failed in this session of the General Assembly. The League's involvement in the **photo voter i.d.** court case, SC v. Holder, continues. No decision is expected over the summer. If the Justice Department and its partners win in court, it can be expected that the restrictive bills from this session will resurface in the next session of the General Assembly.

**Environmental** issues have been important again, with attempts to limit rights of citizens to pursue court action under the Pollution Act passing the House and advancing to the Senate. Attempts to provide **income tax benefits for private school tuition** and home schooling, an effort again lavishly funded by contributions from out-of-state interests, passed the House and has advanced in the Senate. We can hope that opposition in the Senate and the short remaining time in this two-year session (the General Assembly adjourns June 7) will work to reduce chances of passage of these bills. On a brighter note, **ABC Recycling**, which would require recycling by those serving alcoholic beverages, has passed the Senate and is progressing in the House.

Efforts to fully fund the **state education funding formula** have so far failed in this session. Rep. Jenny Horne and others have introduced a bill to establish a dialogue on the basis for funding secondary education in South Carolina, with the expectation of following up in the next session. The bill presents an opportunity for substantial improvement in funding distribution, although the proposed mechanism for funding demands further dialogue.

## Consensus Study Report Privatization

Tuesday, April 24, 2012 -Meeting

Privatization or “Government can’t do anything right...The private sector can do it better

**Ted Volskay**, participant in the national study, author of several of the study’s position papers, and a resident of South Carolina, made an excellent and eye-opening presentation about the concept of **privatization**, presenting a rationale, and pros and cons in several potential services. Examples included areas in which privatizing **might** be in the best interests of citizens—and **where it would not**.

**Clearly**, in any consideration of privatization, questions must be raised questions about

- ☞ Appropriateness (critical needs areas, etc.)
- ☞ Guidelines for implementing
- ☞ Costs - including
  - ⊕ transitional expenses
  - ⊕ operating costs
  - ⊕ costs to taxpayers due to potential loss of employees / tax revenues / benefits, etc.
- ☞ Reasonable protections for government workers affected by change-over
- ☞ In-place plans for evaluation and assessment, monitoring and enforcement; handling outcomes of such
- ☞ Contingency plans if private entity fails (surety bonds; re-uptake by government of the service, ...)
- ☞ Transparency and accountability
- ☞ OVERSIGHT at every step and beyond.

Reading material for the study can be found at:  
<http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/privatization>

Sej Harman

**Review the Proposed Budget attached to the email prior to our Annual Meeting**



## League Media Stars!

**You, too, can be a media star!**

**Carole Cato** spoke at *Winthrop University* on April 17 for a panel discussion on the legislation concerning voting rights and 3rd. party voter registration sponsored by the Democratic Club.

**Rita Paul** testified on April 24 at a *subcommittee hearing* on a child welfare bill.

**Duncan Buell** spoke on Friday, April 27, to the *South Carolina Legislative Audit Council* which is investigating SC's e-voting system. Duncan was told more than once that this will be a process with a lot of input and that they would certainly be calling him back. He is currently doing some searching for answers to the questions he raised, and getting help from the Electronic Voting Network. He will follow up with the LAC when he has something more concrete.

[Duncan's notes are attached to this Email as a Word document. Sej]

## Speakers Bureau

Volunteer **YOUR** voice to speak for the League!



Put your name in the **HAT** to be a speaker on behalf of the League!

Your League has been involved in many important issues (see Lynn Teague's update, p. 4). YOU are needed to ensure our children and grandchildren enjoy the freedoms we've known in a safe, healthy, sustainable environment. League directors cannot do it alone!

Become a "go to" person on an issue you're passionate about. The League is about **quality of life**, which is tied to many issues at local, state, and national levels:

transportation; urban planning; sustainable growth/quality of life; voter photo ID and voter registration; health care; nuclear waste; juvenile justice; women's health; campaign finance; environment; domestic violence; city/county government consolidation; election reform; education; corrections;....

The League provides training /support, talking points, AND encouragement! Hone your skills; gain experience; build networks; learn about government, politics, organizations; enhance your resume. (With your name in the HAT now, you may get the opportunity to put YOUR self in the RING for an elected or appointed office.)

Contact *JoAnne Day* to volunteer **TODAY** or respond with an enthusiastic YES when you are called upon!



**Monday, June 25<sup>th</sup>** will be the date for this year's **Purple Martin Pontoon Boat Sunset Cruise**. We will leave from the dock at Ballentine (about 30 minutes from USC) at 6:30 and wander toward "Lunch Island" (also known as Doolittle or Bomber Island) to view the new mansions and incoming Purple Martins. Sunset will be between 8:30 and 9:30, and we can return whenever the group wishes after about 8:45 or so, with the goal of returning to Ballentine by 10:00. The trip should take about 30-40 minutes each way, depending upon how fast we wish to go, the wind speed, and the number of folks aboard. Maximum speed with two folks is about 15 mph, so we're not talking speedy.

A dinner and salads and a simple desert will be provided. Bring your beverage/s of choice and plan to take your leftovers home with you. If you plan to bring food to share, please make it easy to eat and let me know so I can plan accordingly and have storage space. **Also bring a check for \$45 made out to LWV Columbia Area EF.** We'll have wine opener, glasses, plates, napkins, trash cans, etc., as well as ice and water and a dry bag for binocs and cameras, and of course life jackets. Hope you can join us!! Suzanne

**Limitations: Maximum of 12 folks (first to reserve get priority & a map to the Rhodes),** and no privacy on board (although we do have a port-a-potty in the back of the boat). Folks might consider wearing a bathing suit under shorts so they can cool off in the Lake. Wear shoes that can get wet. It can get cool in the evenings – sometimes – so a sweatshirt may be comfortable. Cameras and binocs are welcomed. The Moon and the Lake traffic should be optimal.





## Our First "Adoption"

New member **Becky McMillan** has stepped up to ensure that **Columbia City Council** receives *League Lines* during the next year.

If you're willing to "put your money where our mouth is," we still have some wonderful adoption opportunities below. Consider adopting a group below to send *League Lines* in hard-copy each month (details when we start in the fall).

The number of copies to be mailed each month is in parentheses, followed by the current cost of first-class postage.

Lexington County Council (9)	\$3.96
Richland County Council (11)	4.84
Mayor of Columbia (1)	.44
<del>Columbia City Council (6)</del>	<del>2.64</del>
Total postage for one mailing:	\$11.88

Senate and House members for Richland and Lexington counties could also be adopted.

If you'd be interested in underwriting the postage for mailing just one edition or each issue for the year, let me know and I'll schedule you for a mailing, **beginning with the August 2012 issue**. We'll bill you or you may pay in advance.



**Sej Harman**

**May 14 – Monday**

**LWV Columbia ANNUAL MEETING**

**Officers & Directors  
Budget  
Bylaws**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS and Other Items of Interest

### *On The Move: Richland County Public Library's Job Center Wins National Award*



Mikelle Street

The Job Center at RCPL, designated specifically for job and career-related resources and personalized assistance, has been selected as the 2012 recipient of the Gale Cengage Learning Award for Excellence in Reference and Adult Library Services, presented by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA).

The annual award is presented to a library or library system for developing an imaginative and unique library resource to meet customers' needs. The Job Center's "Employment Search Portfolio" and "Searching for a Job Online" materials provide comprehensive assistance for the entire job seeking process, and serve as a model for similar services at other libraries. In the past year, the Job Center at RCPL has helped an average of 1,000 people a month.

"There's no doubt that libraries are critical resources for those looking for work, whether they need access to technology or instruction on creating e-mail accounts and resumes," said RCPL's Executive Director Melanie Huggins. "Our libraries meet a dire need, helping residents provide for themselves and their families and making the community stronger."

The Reference and User Services Association of the ALA, represents librarians and library staff in the fields of reference, specialized reference, collection development, readers' advisory and resource sharing. RUSA is the foremost organization of reference and information professionals who make the connections between people and the information sources, services, and collection materials they need. Learn more about the association at [www.ala.org/rusa](http://www.ala.org/rusa).

In 2010, a grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation allowed RCPL to create the Job Center at the Main Library and expand access to computers at all locations by 106 percent. Before the Knight Grant funding, the area where the Job Center is located had 14 public computers available. Today there are 48 computers that are used daily by library customers.

For more information on the Job Center, visit the library's website at [www.myRCPL.com](http://www.myRCPL.com).

Mar 19, 2012

Announcements continued on following page

● **LWVSC** is a finalist for a [2012 Power the Vote Award](#) in the “**Strengthening Democracy**” category. The other three categories are “Effective Member Engagement,” “High Impact Online Engagement,” and “Community Connection.”

**Voting closes on Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>** and winners will be unveiled at the Convention Banquet, June 11. Go to <http://www.lwv.org/content/2012-power-vote-awards>, click on the category “Strengthening Democracy,” scroll down to read the short paragraph about LWVSC, then, VOTE!

● Barbara Zia, LWVSC co-president, submitted this link to an article in *The Sun News* (Myrtle Beach) regarding “SC to say if voter ID implementation possible”:

<http://www.myrtlebeachonline.com/2012/04/29/2800322/sc-to-say-if-voter-id-implementation.html>

● **LWVEF** is pleased to release [Shining a Light: Redistricting Lessons Learned in 2011](#). This comprehensive white paper highlights the groundbreaking efforts of Leagues and other advocates to promote a more fair and transparent redistricting process, and sheds light on key reform opportunities for improving the process over the next decade. The report also includes helpful practices for local Leagues to consider as they work to influence redistricting at the local level.

● **Elections: Infographic Shows Impact of Voter Suppression Laws (NEW)** Recently, Craigslist founder Craig Newmark published an [infographic](#), illustrating the impact of U.S. voting restriction laws, on his craigconnects website. It explores the extensive state actions to limit opportunities for Americans to vote and provides an overview of the voter suppression laws that the League has been fighting and the negative impact that those laws could have on millions of citizens.

● **Sen. Phil Leventis** will speak to the need and common sense of raising additional revenue for the state’s budget at a press conference on **Tuesday, May 1 at 11 am** at the State House. Leventis has introduced a bill calling for the implementation of the Republican-sponsored Tax Realignment Commission (TRAC)



## ABC Recycling Bill – S 461

**Do it TODAY!**

Leave a quick [email or voicemail](#) message TODAY for the House Agriculture Committee.

Ask them to "[support the recycling bill, S.461, without other issues attached.](#)"

Email the whole House Agriculture Committee here:

[http://www.scstatehouse.gov/  
email.php?T=C&C=H2000000050](http://www.scstatehouse.gov/email.php?T=C&C=H2000000050)

or email YOUR county Representative

[for details, see FLYER attached to Email]



## Council Meetings

### Lexington County Council

2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 4:30 PM  
2nd Floor County Administration Building  
212 South Lake Drive  
Lexington, SC 29072

For confirmation of meeting dates, please call 785-8103 or check website [www.lex-co.com](http://www.lex-co.com)

### Richland County Council

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM  
2nd Floor County Administration Building  
2020 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29202

For more information, please contact the Clerk of Council Office @ (803) 576-2061 or check: [www.richlandonline.com/departments/countycouncil/index.asp](http://www.richlandonline.com/departments/countycouncil/index.asp) or [www.rcgov.us](http://www.rcgov.us)

**Remember: to renew or initiate League membership ON-LINE:**

Go to [www.lwvcolumbiasc.org](http://www.lwvcolumbiasc.org), click on “JOIN US” in the left menu, and choose your level of membership.