



LEAGUE LINES

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www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Editor Suzanne Rhodes / Co-editor Sej Harman

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September 2012

CALENDAR & NEWS

SEPTEMBER

7 (F) 11:45 AM - 1:30 PM
Trenholm Road UMC

**CONSENSUS Meeting on
Penny Transportation Tax
Trenholm Road UMC**

BYO BROWN BAG LUNCH



**Drinks & Cookies
provided**

See more, p. 3

10 (M) – 5:30 PM

**Board Meeting - Nurses
Association Building**

**15 (Sa) – League Leaders Day
9:00 – 3:30**

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
Bull Street**

See invitation on p. 2

20 (Th) Public Policy Luncheon



Public Policy Luncheon Thursday, September 20, 2012 11:45 AM Capital Senior Center

“Protecting the Most Vulnerable: Immigrant Children Who Arrive Alone in the U.S.”

Wendy Young, Executive Director, KIND

and

“U.S. Immigration Policy: Issues & Trends”

Juan P. Osuna, Director, EOIR, U.S. DOJ



Wendy Young, Executive Director, Kids In Need of Defense (“KIND”), and **Juan P. Osuna**, Director, Executive Office of Immigration Review (“EOIR”) at the U.S. Department of Justice, will co-present at the September public policy luncheon of the Columbia League of Women Voters.

KIND is a nongovernmental organization founded by the Microsoft Corporation and actress Angelina Jolie to provide legal services and advocacy to the thousands of immigrant and refugee children who arrive alone in the U.S. each year.

Ms. Young will speak on “Protecting the Most Vulnerable: Immigrant Children Who Arrive Alone in the U.S.” She has spent more than two decades advocating for strong U.S. immigration and refugee laws, policies, and practices, including working for Senator Edward Kennedy as his Chief Counsel on Immigration Policy for the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

EOIR is a separate agency within the U.S. Department of Justice. It is responsible for adjudicating immigration cases. Mr. Osuna will speak on “U.S. Immigration Policy: Issues & Trends.” Attorney General Holder appointed Mr. Osuna to the position of Director of EOIR in May 2011. Previously, he was an Associate Deputy Attorney General at the DOJ, where he oversaw immigration policy and other matters. Mr. Osuna also teaches immigration policy at George Mason University School of Law.

Continued on Page 3

2012-2013 Board: President - Rita Paul; 1st VP - JoAnne Day (Legislative Action); 2nd VP – Sally Huguley; Secretary – Martha Roblee; Treasurer – Pat Davy; Directors – Sej Harman (Communications/Membership); Marilyn Knight; Sarah Leverette (State Liaison); **Becky McMillan**; Lynn Teague (**Advocacy**). **Nominating Committee (2013-2014):** TBA. **Off-Board:** Voter Services - Carol Medich; Website - **Teri Evans**; Environmental Affairs - Chester Sansbury; *League Lines* - Suzanne Rhodes (Editor);

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

It's September – Welcome back from a short recess of *League Lines*!

Thanks to all members – new and old – who were in attendance at our August social. We had a great crowd with time for socializing and a bit of business!

Our first event in September is this Friday, **September 7**—the **Consensus Meeting** on the question of the penny sales tax for transportation needs in Richland County. [see p. 3] many of your board members will be attending **League Leaders Day** on **Saturday, September 15**.



Our **Public Policy luncheons** start back on **September 20th** and will continue on the 3rd Thursday's of the month through April 2013 (with a break in December). September will be a great event with guest speakers **Wendy Young** and **Juan Osuna** addressing issues and trends in US immigration and protecting vulnerable immigrant children. Wendy is League and board member **Martha Roblee's** sister. Mark your calendar!

With regard to our luncheon's, please consider volunteering to assist at one of our luncheons by committing to arriving a bit early to help set up and stay about 30 minutes after the conclusion of the program for cleanup. All you need to do is sign up for 1 month. Please let me or **Susan James** (susanbjames@sc.rr.com) know of your availability.

Over the summer several League members attended and presented at Columbia City Council in support of **changing municipal election dates** from April to the 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in odd-numbered years. Council proposed and voted favorably on an ordinance making this change. The League was instrumental in providing information to Council. Voting in November simply makes sense to citizens and this change will go a long way toward increasing voter turnout in the city. Board member **Martha Roblee** has agreed to lead the charge going forward as other city issues supported by the League come to the forefront. Please let Martha (mroblee@sc.rr.com) know if you are interested in being part of this group.

Needless to say, this fall is all about elections. **Carol Medich** continues to lead our **voter registration** efforts. Carol has many events already on the calendar [see p. 4] and can use volunteers to assist her (cimedich@aol.com). These events take a couple of hours of your time. With the many local elections going on and the role the League plays in every election cycle in hosting, moderating and facilitating **candidate forums**, a group has been meeting, chaired by **Carole Cato** (ccato@att.net) and has developed a policy to be used by our League when we are called upon to assist with these events.

As you can see, there are many activities in full swing as we move into the fall. I look forward to the coming "League year" and spending time with many of you. The board is eager to hear from you with your thoughts and ideas.

*Rita***You are invited...**

**League Leaders Day, Saturday, Sept. 15, 9:30-3:30,
St. Paul's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1715 Bull St., Columbia.**

Join us to network, learn, develop and hone your expertise. Highlights include: a US and SC perspective on voter protection, with **special guest presenter Tim O'Brien from LWVUS**; public education funding reform; membership/leadership strategies, 21st century communication techniques, advocacy tactics, and more. **All current and prospective League members are welcome to attend.**

Program details and registration information at <http://lwvsc.org/files/lld2012agenda.pdf>

Continued from p. 1

Wendy Young, Executive Director, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)

Since January 2009, Wendy Young has served as the Executive Director of Kids in Need of Defense (KIND), a nongovernmental organization founded in Fall 2008 by the Microsoft Corporation and actress Angelina Jolie to provide legal services and advocacy to the thousands of immigrant and refugee children who arrive alone in the United States each year.

Ms. Young has spent more than two decades advocating for strong U.S. immigration and refugee laws, policies, and practices. Prior to joining KIND, Ms. Young worked for Senator Edward M. Kennedy as his Chief Counsel on Immigration Policy for the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. She also has served as the Coordinator for U.S. Government Relations for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in which capacity she advocated for robust U.S. support of refugee communities and UNHCR's global operations. She also has worked on immigration and refugee policy and legislation for the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of La Raza, and the Refugee Policy Group.

Her work has been recognized by her colleagues on numerous occasions. She is the recipient of the American Immigration Lawyers Association's annual Human Rights Award, the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center's annual advocacy award, and was bestowed a Certificate of Recognition by the American Bar Association for her work on behalf of immigrant and refugee children.

Ms. Young is a graduate of Williams College and holds J.D. and M.A. degrees from the American University.

Juan P. Osuna, Director of the Executive Office for Immigration Review, U.S. Department of Justice

Juan P. Osuna was appointed to his position by Attorney General Eric Holder in May 2011. Previously, Mr. Osuna was an Associate Deputy Attorney General at the Department of Justice, where he oversaw immigration policy and other matters. Before that he served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Department's Civil Division, where he was in charge of immigration-related civil litigation in the federal courts. Mr. Osuna has also served as Chairman of the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), the highest administrative tribunal on immigration law in the United States. He was appointed to that position by Attorney General Mukasey in 2008, after serving as Acting Chairman for two years. Mr. Osuna was first appointed to the BIA by Attorney General Reno in 2000. Before that, Mr. Osuna was a senior manager with West Group (now Thomson/Reuters-West), the largest legal publisher in the United States, where he oversaw a number of publications and other legal resources, and managed West's editorial operations in Washington, D.C. In addition to his duties at the Department of Justice, Mr. Osuna teaches immigration policy at George Mason University School of Law in Arlington, Virginia. Mr. Osuna holds a law degree from American University's Washington College of Law and a master's degree in law and international affairs from American University's School of International Service.



LWV of Columbia Area Transportation Penny Referendum Study & Consensus

When: Friday, September 7
11:45 AM–1:30 PM

Where: Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, 3401 Trenholm Rd, dining room on first floor of Leisure Ministries Building

***Bring Your Own Brown Bag Lunch –
Drinks & Cookies Provided***

The League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area is revving up for the fall and holding its first consensus meeting for the fiscal year. We will discuss and come to consensus about the Columbia Area League's position on the November 2012 ballot referendum on a proposed penny county sales tax increase to fund Richland County highway, mass transit, and sidewalk/bike path needs.

Presenters: Lil Mood and Hayes Mizell

Facilitator: Keller Barron

Recorder: Martha Roblee

Background materials were distributed by email on August 30th. Limited number of hard copies will be available at the consensus meeting. A copy of the ballot and additional information can be found at the Richland County government website: www.richlandonline.com/TransportationPenny

For Further Information: Keller Barron,
771-4458, kellerhb@att.net.

**See the PDF attached to the *EMAIL*
for the Ballot question with its proposed
allocation of the penny tax revenues.**

VOTER SERVICE

Where's Waldo?

at a LWV Voter Registration Event!!

Listed below is the fall schedule of **Voter Registration** events. It is anticipated that we will be called upon for additional events. Please consider volunteering to work at an event. If you have no experience, you will be paired with someone with experience. Please contact [Carol Medich](mailto:cimedich@aol.com) at cimedich@aol.com or 783-9786 to volunteer. Carol *may* still need volunteers for a few of these scheduled events and additional ones not listed. **Please let her know which ONE you will help with.**

M September 10

Watkins Adult Ed Center, 8:30 – 10:30 am
Covenant Road (Day Program)

W September 12

Midlands Tech, 12 noon – 2 pm, Airport Campus

Th September 13

Richland County Public Library, 4 – 8 pm (may be broken into 2 hour segments) - Sandhills Branch

Tu September 18

Watkins Adult Ed Center, 5:30 – 7 pm
Covenant Road (Night Program)

W September 19

Midlands Tech, 12 noon – 2 pm, Beltline Campus



YOUTH VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT

The Youth Voter Registration Project has been completed. The Columbia League made 10 site visits and registered 266 students with the assistance of 25 League members. We discovered that many of the local high schools had conducted their own voter registration projects through government classes. Richland One School District conducted registration in all of their high schools; we were able to participate with them as they did their final school—A. C. Flora.

We plan to use the contacts made at these schools to conduct further registration as soon as school begins in August. In the past, some schools throughout the area have invited the League to have a voter registration table at their “Back to School Night” or their first PTA meeting.

A big thanks to all League members who participated in this project. Hopefully, we can count on you for continued participation in our summer/fall activities.

Carol Medich

Update on VOTER ID status

After testifying as a witness for the defendant-intervenors on Thursday of the week-long trial, **Barbara Zia** remained in the courtroom to observe the proceedings. She shared at the end of the trial on **Friday, August 31:**



"There's no telling how the 3-judge federal panel will rule on whether R54, South Carolina's new photo ID law for voters, is discriminatory in purpose and effect. LWV leaders need to be prepared with an all-out education campaign in case the new law is implemented for the Nov. 6th election. Attorneys on the LWVSC's side presented a strong case that the law is intended by its legislative supporters to disproportionately impact minorities, and would do so. News about the ruling by another panel of federal judges that Texas's photo ID law would discriminate against minority voters came in the middle of the trial. It's unclear whether that decision will have an impact on the SC lawsuit, as the two states and their photo ID laws are different. But there were smiles on our side of the courtroom after learning about the Texas decision. Attorneys for both South Carolina and the U.S. Department of Justice and the defendant-intervenors (including LWVSC) will present briefs to the Court next week, and return on Sept. 24 for oral arguments. Judges will rule by Oct. 1."

Additional reading:

LWVUS blog on Texas photo ID law ruling—
<http://www.lwv.org/blog/texas-voter-photo-id-law-struck-down>

Story in *The Atlantic* about South Carolina Election Director **Marci Andino's** testimony in SC v. Holder—
<http://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2012/08/in-south-carolina-shockingly-candid-talk-about-voter-discrimination/261760/>

NOTE: Tim O'Brien, League of Women Voters of the United States, Specialist for the Public Advocacy for Voter Protection project, will speak to us about national efforts to protect voting rights at **League Leaders Day on September 15**. Sure hope y'all can be there to hear from an expert.

Report on August 7 Forum: The State of the Judiciary in SC: From Research to Reality

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina wrapped up its two-year project on the importance of independence and diversity in the state judicial system with a public forum entitled "The State of the Judiciary in South Carolina: From Research to Reality." The event was held on Tuesday, August 7, 2012, at the University of South Carolina School of Law Auditorium, with the 6 p.m. reception followed by forum, with distinguished panelists:



- Senator Larry A. Martin (R-Pickens County, Dist. 2), Judiciary Committee Chair and Judicial Merit Selection Commission Vice Chair;
- Senator Floyd Nicholson (D-Abbeville, Greenwood & Laurens Counties, Dist. 10), Judicial Merit Selection Commission Member;
- Judge Carolyn C. Matthews, President, S.C. Women Lawyers Assoc.;
- Dean Robert M. Wilcox, University of South Carolina School of Law; Alice Paylor, President-Elect, South Carolina Bar; and
- John Simpkins, Assistant Professor and Director of Diversity Initiatives, Charleston School of Law.
- Moderator was Constance Anastopoulo, Associate Professor, Charleston School of Law.

The League and invited guests reviewed the results of our statewide education initiative as well as of our research on the current state of the South Carolina judicial system's independence and diversity.

South Carolina Women Lawyers Association was a co-sponsor of the event.

To renew or initiate League membership ON-LINE:
Go to www.lwvcolumbiasc.org, click on "JOIN US"
in left menu, and choose your level of membership.

LWVUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

● **National Voter Registration Day - September 25th.** LWVUS is urging every League to take part in National Voter Registration Day, a nationwide, nonpartisan effort to register thousands of voters on one single day – September 25, 2012. More than 250 national and regional organizations, celebrities, businesses, and high-profile leaders—including 30 Leagues--have already signed on to participate. Now it's your turn! In order to participate, you must officially sign up at www.nationalvoterregistrationday.com. Once you sign up, you'll be invited to share when and where you'll host your registration event on 9/25.

● **First UN International Day of the Girl -- October 11, 2012:** The U.N. General Assembly has passed a resolution to observe the International Day of the Girl and the first observance is **October 11, 2012** in NYC. The League, as a member of the Working Group on Girls (coalition of 80+ UN affiliated non-governmental organizations) will be sponsoring events during that day. We invite League members who are teachers and work with girls to become involved through our first ever VIRTUAL SUMMIT (www.DayoftheGirlSummit.com) where girls can participate in events locally. Check out our toolkit on how you can ask local towns to issue proclamations, get involved in other activities, win prizes and become involved in making this a better world for girls everywhere! If you will be in the NY area that week and would like to attend either event, please contact LWVUS UN Observer Rosalee Keech at unobserver@lwv.org.

● **Under 45? Apply to be a part of our Young Professionals Task Force.** LWVUS is seeking interested young professional members to apply for a new Task Force. If you are interested and are a League member in good standing who is age 45 or under and has an interest in leading the effort to **recruit, engage, and attract more young professionals to join the League**, please submit your application! Please note that being a member or co-chair of the Task Force is a one-year commitment. To fill out an application click here. The application **deadline is September 30**.

● **Preventive Health Care Benefits for Women Start under Affordable Care Act:** New health care benefits for millions of women started on August 1st under the Affordable Care Act! Read details in our blog.

OTHER Announcements of Interest

● Richland County is looking for volunteers to serve on the boards for accommodations tax committee, (4); airport commission, (2) members of the business service center appeals board, (3) and the county-city animal care advisory committee (2). The **deadline is September 4** and interested persons should call the clerk's office 576-2068 for details.

● The American Public Health Association (APHA) recently updated its health reform website with new content and resources. Each page now features answers to frequently asked questions, links to APHA fact sheets and other resources, and links to other useful websites and resources. The APHA website is: (http://action.apha.org/site/R?i=GSILS8O8Py4_GHNjcg2N_w)

● On **Wednesday, August 22, 2012**, *The Nation* published an article by "ActNow" columnist Peter Rothberg entitled "The Five Most Under-Reported Stories of the Summer." The five issues below were felt to "especially demand far more attention than they've received this summer."

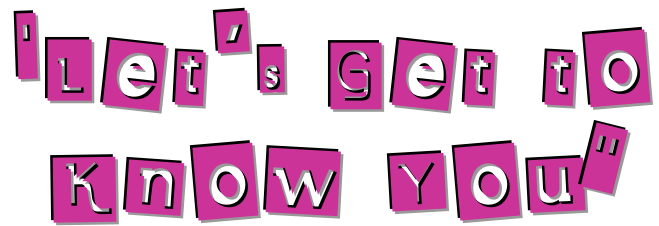
- 1) **Jettisoning Democracy in South Carolina** in which local *Free Times* investigative reporter Corey Hutchins is cited as "one of the few journalists taking the case seriously."
- 2) Military Suicides
- 3) Rise of Islamophobic Violence in the US
- 4) The Amazon [.com] Economy Gains Steam
- 5) Rapid Escalation of Climate Change

Link to the five stories in *The Nation*:
<http://www.thenation.com/blog/169492/five-most-under-reported-stories-summer#>

● On **Monday, September 10, 2012**, at 1:00 PM, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary will host **Zach Wahls**, author of *My Two Moms—Lessons of Love, Strength, and What Makes a Family*. **The event is free and open to the public.**

Wahls will speak in the Stavros Lecture Hall of the Casey Education Center. LTSS is located at 4201 North Main Street, Columbia, SC. The seminary's website is ltss.lr.edu, or, for further information, contact:

Mike Langford, Director of Marketing,
 828-328-7302 mike.langford@lr.edu or
Maggie Greene, Associate Director of Marketing,
 828-328-7109 maggie.greene@lr.edu




Shirley Geiger, is a new member who has retired back to her Columbia home after traveling the world with her military husband. She spent 17 years in Savannah, where she taught American History and Political Science at Savannah. Shirley says she's very interested in Voter's Service, among other activities.

Marianne McGrath and her husband did research nationwide to choose their retirement home on a lake and a city with a university. Columbia fit the bill! She had leadership positions in leagues in San Diego and Kalamazoo (membership). Now she wants to be a worker bee.

"Adopt" Lexington County Council...
 Speak up and "put your money where *our* mouth is" by mailing hard copies of *League Lines* each month to Lexington County Council for about \$4.00/month.


Senate and House members for Richland and Lexington counties are also "adoptable."

Please contact Sej Harman (sejharman@att.net) .

 **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

 **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 or www.rcgov.us



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