

Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/ BLUFFTON AREA



League Kicks Off a New Year!

September 13—First General Meeting: Hilton Head’s Future

Come hear an update of Hilton Head Island’s vision project, entitled “Our Future.” The meeting will be at 10 AM on Wednesday, September 13, at the Hilton Head Public Service District Community Room, 21 Oak Park Drive, off Mathews Drive.

Emily Sparks, the Vision Project Leader for the Town, will talk about the history of the project, the current status of the information gathering process, what the project hopes to accomplish, and how to voice your views about the future of the Town.



HILTON HEAD ISLAND - OUR FUTURE

Emily Sparks, Vision Project Leader, Town of Hilton Head, will address the League Sept. 13.

The program should be of interest to everyone in the region because major changes on Hilton Head Island could impact the whole area.

Come and bring a guest. The meeting is open to the public.

October 11—A Fourth “Conversation”

Save this date on your calendar: Wednesday, October 11, 3 to 5 PM. On this date and at this time, the League will hold the fourth in its ongoing series of “Conversations.” The topic in October is “Making Democracy Work: A Conversation About Voting Rights.”

The location is the Campbell Chapel A.M.E. Church in Bluffton. More details to follow in the October Lighthouse.

~Joan Kinne-Shulman, Vice President, Program Chair

Help National Voter Registration Day, September 26

The League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area will be registering new voters at three locations on Tuesday, September 26. The newly formed Voter Registration Committee, which consists of five new League members, is very energetic but needs your help to cover the time slots at each location. Training will be provided onsite by the contact person.

Hilton Head Library—11 AM to 3 PM. Contact: Jan Ferrari, janferrari2011@gmail.com

Bluffton Library –10 AM to 2 PM. Contact: Ella Davis, emdavis21@gmail.com

Technical College of the Lowcountry—9 AM to 3 PM. Contact: Ilene Schwartz, imschwartz58@gmail.com

Last year we also registered new voters at the high schools but in talking with the principals we have decided we need to register newly eligible seniors in April just before they graduate. Your assistance will be appreciated.

~Ruth Wilwerding, Voter Service Chair

Inside This Issue

Sept 13 First General Membership Meeting	1
Oct. 14 Voting Rights Conversation	1
National Voter Registration Day Volunteers	1
Co-Presidents’ Message	2
Observer Corps	2
League Condemns Hatred, Violence	3
Education Committee Meets	4
Member Spotlight	4
Why Did You Join the League?	5
Mark Your Calendar	6
Officers and Board	6
Membership Form for New League Members	7



**Making
Democracy
Work**

Message from the Co-President

The calm of summer was shattered by violence the weekend of August 11 and 12 when neo-Nazis and other extremist groups converged in Charlottesville, Virginia vowing to “take America back.” It is at a time such as this that we are reminded that safeguarding democracy requires eternal vigilance. As Bill Moyers put it in the recent “Conversation with Bill Moyers” aired on PBS, “Voting is easy, but democracy is hard.”



Nancy Williams

The League of Women Voters has a critical role to play in these unsettling times. As outgoing LWVSC co-president JoAnne Day put it at the state convention this spring, the League is non-partisan, but we know the difference between right and wrong and truth and lies. As the social fabric of this country is loosening, it is more important than ever that voters’ and government officials’ decisions be informed by facts and reason, not arrogant ignorance.

At our May annual meeting, the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area reaffirmed our commitment to “Making Democracy Work” by informing and engaging voters and protecting voters and voters’ rights. At a July session, your local leadership identified making our League the authoritative voice on election and election reform and growing, engaging, and diversifying our membership in support of our values, vision, and public policy positions as key goals for our new board.

Among our programs planned for this fall will be a conversation about protecting voting rights, particularly among vulnerable populations, and a program dealing with the pernicious effects of gerrymandering and the consequent need for redistricting in South Carolina before 2020. We will kick off our new program year on September 13 with a presentation and discussion of the Town of Hilton Head Island’s visioning initiative.

As we Leaguers often say, “Democracy is not a spectator sport.” We need you to become engaged in our work to make both your League and our country’s democracy strong.

See you in September!

~Nancy Williams, Co-President

League Observers Watch It Live

Our League will continue to observe at the Town Council Meetings and the Planning Commission meetings for the towns of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton, and we need more of you to volunteer to be Observers.

The Hilton Head Island Town Council meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 5 PM. The Planning Commission meets the 1st Wednesday at 9 AM and the 3rd Wednesday at 3 PM. All of these meetings take place in the Hilton Head Island Council Chamber.

The Bluffton Town Council meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6 PM. The Bluffton Planning Commission meets the 4th Tuesday, also at 6 PM. Meetings take place in the Council Chamber.

If you have an interest in the workings of your local government, and would like to represent the League of Women Voters at any of the above meetings and report back on items which might warrant action on the League’s part, please contact Sally McGarry at 843-342-9254 or at smcgarry@roadrunner.com.

~Sally McGarry, Chair, Observer Corps

Visit our website
<http://www.lwhhi.org>

League of Women Voters Condemns Hatred and Violence

In the wake of the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, League of Women Voters of the United States President Chris Carson released the following statement:

"Yesterday the world watched in horror as white supremacists gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia. There is no place for hatred and violence in our democracy and all leaders must condemn these acts of domestic terrorism. We must send a strong message that while the freedom of speech and the freedom of assembly are some of our most cherished rights and must be protected, those rights do not extend to what we witnessed yesterday. The League of Women Voters stands in solidarity with the victims of violence in Charlottesville and against white supremacism."



*Making
Democracy
Work*



League members attending the Bluffton vigil included (l to r) Sally McGarry, Fran Holt, Nancy Williams, Sandy Stern, Katie Miller, and Mary Ann Bromley

Locally, about eight members of our League gathered at the Oyster Factory Park in Bluffton on August 15 at Bluffton's community vigil to voice our solidarity with Charlottesville and to stand up to racism, bigotry, hatred, violence and anti-Semitism.

Over 100 local residents listened to a number of speakers, including program organizers, the Bluffton Mayor and several Town Council members, faith-based clergy, and local residents who shared their thoughts and feelings. With prayers, songs, and words of hope, love and a commitment to justice and American values, the group remembered Heather Heyer and the two police officers, Lt. H. Jay Cullen and Berke M.M. Bates, who lost their lives on August 12.

Bluffton Mayor and League member Lisa Sulka spoke of the loving community she knows Bluffton to be and encouraged us all to get out and get to know our neighbors.

Our own LWVHHI/BA Co-President Nancy Williams also decried the violence and invited those in attendance to join our League in our efforts to foster civil conversations and to protect our democratic institutions.



Co-President Nancy Williams decried the violence and invited vigil attendees to join our League in efforts to foster civil conversations and protect our democratic institutions.

Education Committee Meets September 27



**Making
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Work**

In a [recent study of the 50 states](#), *US News and World Report* ranked South Carolina as 50th in education, dead last. South Carolina came in 45th overall (there were seven categories measured) and 48th in opportunity. Good schools, as we all might agree, are a pathway to opportunity.

Are you concerned about what that means for the children of South Carolina? Are you interested in learning more about:

- How school funding in South Carolina works;
- What the state Supreme Court has ordered the legislature to do to help historically neglected poor rural school districts and how our legislators have responded;
- How our local Beaufort County School District is performing and whether we are making progress in closing the achievement gap between white students and African American and Latino students;
- What is being advocated by many of our South Carolina legislators in the form of tuition vouchers and tax credits for parents sending their children to private schools?

In a recent study measuring how well states educate their students, *US News and World Report* ranked South Carolina 50th, dead last.

The Education Committee will be looking at some of these issues and planning our agenda for the year at our first committee meeting on September 27 at 10 AM. We will meet at the Moss Creek home of the committee chair, Kathy Quirk. If you would like to join us, please contact Kathy at quirk.kathy@gmail.com or 843-836-2892 so that she can send directions.

We are a welcoming and vibrant group of women who would be glad to have you join our committee!



Lighthouse editor Mary Agnes Garman



Member Spotlight: Mary Agnes Garman

How did you end up in the Lowcountry?

No more snow shovels and icy commutes after decades in Northern Virginia drew husband Rick and me to Hilton Head, his father's beloved vacation destination. With its spectacular foliage and semblance of four seasons, Hilton Head had retirement essentials: access to health care, and plenty of restaurants!

What sparked your interest in civic engagement?

My great grandparents immigrated in the 1870's to be greeted by signs that read "No Irish need apply." Stereotyped as illiterate, pugnacious, fond of the drink, and Catholic, they found their path to the Pennsylvania coal mines, determined that future generations would have a better chance.

Education was revered and essential, and informed voting an assumed responsibility. From an early age, I remember not one but two daily newspapers: *The Washington Post* and *The Evening Star*, the constant arrival of *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines, and the drone of "Meet the Press" on TV. My father's lapel button from MLK's 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom is a treasured and symbolic family memento.

Do you remember why you decided to join the League of Women Voters?

For me, it was personal. I looked at my eight-year-old son, Griffin, and my three-year-old daughter, Amelia, and I realized that the desire to make change in our country won't happen if all I'm doing is clicking through my Facebook newsfeed or anxiously reading yet another jaw-dropping headline in the newspaper. I need to lead by example.

I decided to take action.

Luckily, I didn't have to look far. My mother-in-law, Mary Rae Bragg, is the president of the League of Women Voters of Iowa. When Mom Bragg sensed my fervor, she told me all about the League and the issues they stand behind. It didn't take long to convince me to join up.

What I didn't anticipate is how much I am learning about the issues, thanks to the dedicated, experienced, intelligent and powerful women who are members of our chapter. I have been in awe watching and listening to my fellow League members talk about the issues in a rational, informative and unbiased way.

As co-chair of membership with the fabulous Ellen Dahl I am tasked with finding new ways to attract new members. If I could package all of my feelings for why I decided to join in a pill form and dose the public, I'd certainly try! In the mean time, Ellen, Nancy and I have been brainstorming ways to engage potential members.

We would love to hear from you, my beautiful and involved ladies of democracy.

Why did you join the League? Why is the League important for you?

If you know someone who would be interested in joining the League of Women Voters, please feel free to e-mail me at heather@braggmedia.com A membership form is also attached to this newsletter.

~Heather Bragg, Membership Co-Chair



Heather Bragg, Membership Co-Chair



**Making
Democracy
Work**

(Mary Agnes Garman, continued from page 4)

A 30+ year career as a principal and teacher in the Fairfax County Public Schools outside Washington, DC made civic engagement a must. In addition to working with children, families, and teachers, we public education advocates joined ranks at the county and state levels to promote policies that would enhance, not diminish nor discredit, public schools.

Why the League?

Reading *The Island Packet*, I quickly realized I knew little about my new community. Several women I'd come to know and admire through their support of The Literacy Center (formerly Literacy Volunteers of the Lowcountry) were League leaders too, lending instant credibility. Excellent programs and well-informed audience questions confirmed my wise decision to join.

Our League's vital role in providing voter information was reinforced as I waited in my precinct's line last November. Determined to learn more about the proposed county tax and school bond/tax proposals, I had attended the League's valuable October 23 public information forum. Dismayed, I overheard community members who had confused information.

Many of us are looking for ways we can help "Make Democracy Work." As the new *Lighthouse* editor, I aim to lend a hand and a voice to the League's important efforts. Dip your toe in the water. Whether you are a full or part-time resident, with some time or little, the League has a place for you too!



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
HILTON HEAD ISLAND/
BLUFFTON AREA

www.lwvhi.org



@LWVHHIBA



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
HILTON HEAD ISLAND /BLUFFTON AREA

Monthly Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2017- 2018

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held at 10 AM at Palmetto Electric Cooperative on Mathews Drive on Hilton Head Island, unless otherwise noted. All members are welcome at Board meetings.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

September 7—Board Meeting, 10 AM, Palmetto Electric, Hilton Head Island

September 13—General Membership Meeting, 10 AM, Hilton Head PSD Community Room. Featured: Emily Sparks, Vision Project Leader, Town of Hilton Head. See page 1.

September 26-National Voter Registration Day; volunteers needed. See page 1.

September 27—Education Committee Meeting, 10 AM. See page 4.

September 27— Land Use/Natural Resources Committee Meeting, 2 PM, Coastal States Bank on Main St. For information, call Sally McGarry (843-342-9254)

October 11— “A Conversation About Voting Rights,” 3-5 PM, Campbell Chapel A.M.E. Church in Bluffton. See page 1.

OFFICERS

Co-Presidents:	
Dot Law	843-842-5622
Nancy Williams	843-681-4212
Vice-President, Program Chair:	
Joan Kinne-Shulman	843-842-9246
Treasurer:	
Mary Jo Happle	843-689-3952
Secretary:	
Jan Ferrari	303-916-9583(c)

DIRECTORS

Communications:	
Sandy Stern	843-342-4834
Education:	
Kathy Quirk	843-836-2892
Membership:	
Heather Bragg	843-415-3490
Ellen Dahl	843-785-2115
Observer Corps/Local Issues:	
Sally McGarry	843-342-9254
State Issues/Advocacy:	
MaryAnn Bromley	843-298-2320
Voter Service:	
Ruth Wilwerding	843-671-5562

Know a Potential New Member?

A League Membership Form for new members is attached to this newsletter. Forward this newsletter, print out the membership form, or bring him/her to September 13 kick-off meeting. Better yet, do all three!

Questions? Contact Membership Co-Chairs Heather Bragg or Ellen Dahl, show at right. As a reminder, current League members renew according to anniversary dates.

Off-Board Positions

Archivist:	Connie Voight
Facebook:	Heather Bragg
Meeting and Events Planner:	Jan Billingslea
Natural Resources/Land Use:	Sally McGarry
Newsletter:	Mary Agnes Garman
Nominating:	Fran Holt
Webmaster:	David Rice

League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area
Membership Form 2017-2018

New Member

Current Member/Membership Renewal

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Dues: Individual* \$60

 Household* \$90

Donation** to LWVHHI/BA (optional)

Total Amount Enclosed _____

*\$60 for one year, one member; \$90 for one year, two or more members of the same household. Please make checks payable to LWVHHI/BA.

**If you would like your donation to be tax-deductible, please write a second check made out to LWVUS Education Fund, which is a 501c(3).

Please check your areas of interest:

Voter services

Education

Natural resources and land use

State government issues and advocacy

Local issues/Observer corps

Programs

Membership

Fund-raising

Communications (newsletter, publicity, Twitter, Facebook, website)

Other (specify) _____

How many years have you been a member of the League of Women Voters? _____

Please mail this form along with a check for your membership to:

Ellen Dahl 3 Saddlewood Ct. Hilton Head Island, SC 29926