

Lighthouse

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



March 8 Membership Meeting “What’s Happening with Sewers and Wells?”

The focus at our March membership meeting will be on the issues of sewers and the viability of private wells. Hilton Head Public Service District General Manager Pete Nardi and Beaufort Jasper Water Sewer Authority General Manager Ed Saxon will enlighten us. They will give us details about the progress of programs to provide sewers for the underserved and tell us how viable the wells many people use for their water needs are.

Join us for the updates on these issues of long-term concern to our League. The meeting will be at the Hilton Head PSD meeting room, 21 Oak Park Drive, off Mathews Drive, on Hilton Head Island. The public is welcome.

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Report on the Program Planning Meeting, February 8, 2017

Our members gathered on Wednesday, February 8 at 10:00 AM at the Hilton Head PSD to participate in state and local program planning. Vice-President and Program Chair Joan Kinne-Shulman and members Janet Law, Sally McGarry, and Kathy Quirk presented the LWVSC policy positions. They recommended whether the policies should be retained, dropped, or reconsidered. No positions were recommended to be dropped. The presenters and participants made comments to be passed along to the state League on the criminal/juvenile justice, education, and state and local government policies. We recommended that the other positions be retained.

The group selected five action priorities for LWVSC to focus on in 2017-2018: 1. voter access and the election process, 2. tax reform, 3. education, 4. healthcare, and 5. transportation. No new study was put forth, but we did recommend that the state League pay attention to the laws on the practices of the usurious lending businesses (also known as predatory lending). Our program planning response form will be submitted by March 1.

We reviewed the local Focus for Action items for Making Democracy Work in 2016-2017 to see which ones we accomplished and to recommend new ones for 2017-2018. These recommendations will be reviewed by our board at its next meeting.

Under Focus for Action in 2016-2017, the presenters reported that the local League helped change the requirements for collecting signatures for school board candidates, developed an off-shore drilling position in concert with other SC Leagues, held candidate forums for key local races, held a forum on the sales tax referenda, and--in lieu of a voter's guide--created questions for candidates to be used by local newspapers when they interviewed candidates.

Some revisions were made to our previously adopted Local Long-Term Areas of Interest and Local Positions. The board will also review the changes at its next meeting.

The final version of both reports will be submitted to the membership for approval at the annual meeting in May.

—Joan Kinne-Shulman

Message from the President



**Making
Democracy
Work**

In the article below you will see that we are having a cocktail party on March 5. I hope you can come and will bring a guest or two. It will provide a good opportunity in a beautiful location to socialize--something that I think is an important part of League. Knowing each other and feeling that we share the common bond of caring about making democracy work make the work that we do a lot easier and more enjoyable.

Fortunately, there are lots of opportunities in addition to an occasional cocktail party or luncheon to get to know each other. Participants in the MLK Day celebrations visited with each other while marching. The Jazz Brunch was also a social occasion in addition to being a fundraiser. Working together at voter registration drives, doing committee work or planning events together is also at least partly social. This being a relatively small community, we are also likely to run into fellow League members at non-League events, at the grocery store, in our neighborhoods, or on the beach!

While on the subject of community, I want our readers to know that the League is concerned about the proposed development of the Hilton Head National Golf Course property. Consequently, we have asked the Beaufort County Council to be extremely cautious in what it decides. Our concerns include the impact on the environment and the ability of the government to provide adequate services. Our letter can be seen on our website www.lwvhsi.org in the Action and Advocacy Section.

I hope to see you at the party on March 5 and again at our meeting on March 8.

March 5 Cocktail Party

Make plans now to greet spring with League friends on Sunday, March 5 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the waterfront home of Fran and Bill Bollin at 23 Big Oak Street just west of the Hilton Head Island bridge. Spouses and friends are welcome.

There is no charge for the event, but League members are asked to bring an hors d'oeuvre to serve six.

Reservations should be made with Jan Billingslea at jjbill12@aol.com or 843-815-3743 or Fran Holt at 843-837-3436.



League members and friends of Julie Wittig, now a League member in Iowa, gathered at the Boathouse on Hilton Head in February. From left to right: Quirk, Wittig, Williams, Yearwood, Holt, Ghirardelli, Stern, and Law.

League of Women Voters of South Carolina LEAD Day, January 2017

Furthering the cause of “Making Democracy Work,” four members of our local Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area League of Women Voters—Fran Holt, Sue Yearwood, Kathy Quirk, and Karen Arms--participated in a day of South Carolina legislative current information and action in Columbia on January 28th. This prelude to the 2017 State Convention, scheduled for April 29th and 30th, focused on the League’s planning for the agenda of the year.

Legislative updates were provided by Patrick Dennis, Speaker of the House’s Counsel and former Chief Counsel of the House Judiciary Committee, and Lynn Teague, VP of LWVSC. The consistent message was for members to make sure they are being heard because it matters. Picking up the phone to call legislators, making personal contact, and writing personal messages were recommended.

The most prominent topic for consideration was the League’s continuing emphasis on the integrity of elections. This was underscored by the fact that less than ten percent of eligible voters in South Carolina vote in primaries. Confounding issues are technology transformations to new machines in the office as well as support of verifiable paper ballots. Related is the question of the League favoring construction of ballots not allowing straight party votes. Also being considered are permanent absentee status for persons with disabilities, reducing wait time and lines, reaching college student voters, uselessness of witnessed signatures, and provision of child care. A continuing issue is the fairness of district lines and the question of “gerrymandering,” despite adherence to federal guidelines. A recommended web site is www.scvotes.com.

Definitions of “dark money,” “hard money,” and “soft money,” all pertaining to the reporting of political contributions, will need clarification in the realm of transparency and ethics reform. Candidate applications for positions have raised questions of budget, separation of powers, selection by gubernatorial appointments or panels, and how to apply.

Identified as state problems were (1) not enough protection for customers at the state level of massive utility rate increases, (2) uncertain reproductive health costs and insurance coverage, (3) a bill to gut the “automatic stay” provision which prevents continuation of construction while filed questions remain unanswered, and (4) lack of enthusiasm for controls of gun violence.

An explanation of the South Carolina Environmental Law Project (as collaborative partner of the regional Southern Environmental Law Center) was provided by Amelia A. Thompson, Staff Attorney. Founded 30 years ago, this non-profit project provides legal environmental issue services and proactive legal advice. Issues with which they have been active include dam and bridge safety, extreme weather, clean energy, solar energy and overtaxing of solar, and property protection regarding the oil pipeline and off-shore drilling. Under consideration is a constitutional amendment for an Environmental Bill of Rights on the ballot for the right to breathe clean air, drink clean water, etc.

The upcoming 2017 State Convention of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina will be in Columbia April 29 and 30 at The Inn (at USC). The theme is “Democracy—Pass It On!” Officer elections and the refinement and focus of the agenda for the year will be enacted

--Karen Arms

Update from the Education Committee

At the state level, the League continues to be a strong supporter of legislation to address the inequities experienced by the poor rural school districts represented in the Abbeville case. There has been very little legislative effort to correct these inequities but we will keep members informed about specific bills as they are brought forward. According to Jane Pulling, LWVSC Education Chair, other priorities during this session include raising the base student allocation to the EFA legal requirement and adequate funding for school busses. Bills offered in support of expanding tax credits/ tax deductible contributions for scholarships for special needs students attending private schools are expected to be introduced this session. The League opposes all uses of public tax funds to support private and/or religious education.

At the local level, the Education Committee has identified the following areas of concern to guide our work:

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Visit our Web Site

www.lwvhhi.org



Spotlight on League Member Ellen Dahl

I would like to introduce myself to the LWVHHI/BA and to the League in general. My husband and I are from Illinois and met at the University of Illinois. We married after graduation and Randy's career has taken us to Bloomington, IN--2 years, Amherst, MA--5 years, Lexington, KY (Go Cats!)--20 years, Tuscaloosa, AL(Roll Tide!)--3years, Stillwater OK (Go Pokes!)--5 years, Richmond, VA (Go Rams!) -2 years, and Al Ain, United Arab Emirates (Go ????)--6 years.

I have been a waitress, a travel agent, university reference librarian, Latin teacher, and school librarian. While I have always been interested in politics, I used work and raising two children as an excuse not to "get involved." While in the UAE, living with people from all over the world, world affairs became more real and important to me. In 2012 we landed on Hilton Head Island where our daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren live. We attended a League-sponsored mayoral debate and I was very impressed by the facilitator, Sally McGarry, and the forum in general. When we voted, Sally was a poll worker and I asked her about the League. The next thing I knew I was taking minutes at the board meetings.



I have thoroughly enjoyed playing a small part in the very important work of the League.

—Ellen Dahl, Secretary

Education Committee Areas of Concern (continued from page 3)

- Continued monitoring of the Beaufort County School District (BCSD) board;
- Concern about reports that minority students are subject to greater disciplinary action in the BCSD;
- The resolution of the ACE situation and its effect on opportunities for technical/career training in Beaufort and Jasper Counties;
- Tracking the legislative responses to the Abbeville court decision;
- Following legislation which proposes to broaden the use of public tax dollars spent on private schools;
- Early intervention and 4K issues.

The Education Committee will be holding its next meeting at 10 AM on March 1 at the home of Kathy Quirk, Committee Chair. New members and all others are invited to join us. Contact Kathy for directions at quirk.kathy@gmail.com or 724-549-4805.

—Kathy Quirk, Chair

Guide to Elected Officials for Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area

Thanks to the hard work of Voter Service Chair Ruth Wilwerding with help from Katie Miller and Joan Kinne-Shulman and financial support from the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, the 2017 Edition of the *Guide* is now available. It can be found at many places including the Hilton Head Island and Bluffton libraries and Town Halls, the Chamber of Commerce, League meetings and the League website www.lwvhhi.org. It is a great source for finding out who our elected officials are and how to contact them.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
HILTON HEAD ISLAND/
BLUFFTON AREA**



www.LWVHHI.org

 [@LWVHHIBA](https://twitter.com/LWVHHIBA)

Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2016- 2017

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held monthly at 10:00 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

March 1—Education Committee Meeting, Home of Kathy Quirk, Moss Creek, 10 AM

March 5—Greeting Spring Cocktail Party, 5-7 PM, Home of Fran and Bill Bollin, 23 Big Oak Street, Hilton Head

March 8—Membership Meeting, Hilton Head PSD, 10 AM, “What’s Happening with Sewers and Wells?” Speakers Pete Nardi and Ed Saxon

March 22—Natural Resources/Land Use Committee Meeting, Coastal States Bank, Hilton Head, 2:00 PM

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK @

League of Women Voters of
Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area

OFFICERS

President:	Fran Holt	843-837-3436
Vice-President, Program Chair:	Joan Kinne-Shulman	843-842-9246
Treasurer:	Mary Jo Happle	843-689-3952
Secretary:	Ellen Dahl	843-785-2115

BOARD

Communications:	Sandy Stern	843-342-4834
Education:	Kathy Quirk	843-836-2892
Membership:	Ellie Dixon	843-705-3973
	Diane Neal	843-757-0622
Observer Corps/Local Issues	Sally McGarry	843-342-9254
State Issues/Advocacy:	Patricia Felton Montgomery	843-707-1036
Voter Service:	Ruth Wilwerding	843-671-5562

OFF-BOARD POSITIONS

Archivist:	Connie Voight
Facebook	Karen Wessel
Healthcare:	Alison Burke
Meeting and Events Planner	Jan Billingslea
Natural Resources/Land Use	Sally McGarry
Newsletter/Nominating	Nancy Williams
Webmaster:	David Rice