



Lighthouse

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

Where is the League today? Where is it going in 2018?
January 10, 10 AM, Open Meeting

Julie Hussey, Co-President, League of Women Voters of South Carolina

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Hear about the League's exciting work in combatting gerrymandering at the state and local levels and learn about the League's priorities and plans as the 2018 South Carolina Legislative Session begins January 9. As co-president of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina, guest Julie Hussey brings knowledge of activities at the statehouse and those initiated by the nine local Leagues that span South Carolina.

Join the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area at 10 AM. Wednesday, January 10 at the Public Service District Community Room, located at 21 Oak Park Drive on Hilton Head. The general meeting is open to the public. Guests are welcome!



Guest Speaker Julie Hussey

STOP THE GERRYMANDER: SC Redistricting 2020

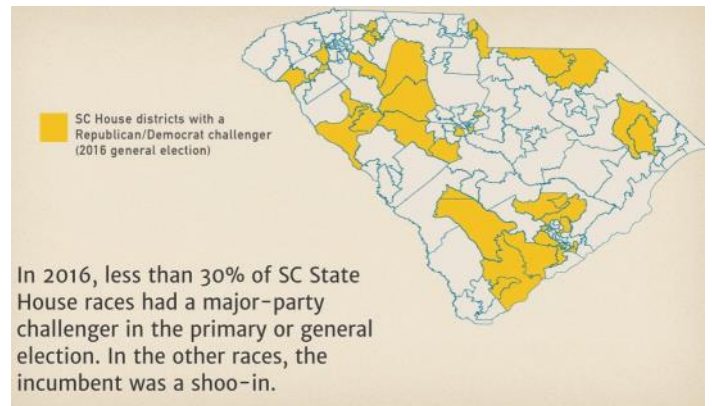
If not now, when? If not the LWVSC and the LWWHHI/BA, who?

Thirteen states, including South Carolina, have been labeled as being extremely gerrymandered when analyses are done using instruments such as the "Efficiency Gap," a measure used to ensure that district maps are converted to seats in a politically equitable manner.

You may recall that in October 2017 the U.S. Supreme Court (SCOTUS) heard arguments in the Wisconsin *Gill v. Whitford* case. While the court has not yet issued an opinion, there was much discussion about the Efficiency Gap measure and what criteria constitutes extreme gerrymandering. The legal argument in this case seems to focus primarily about whether extreme partisan gerrymandering is offensive to constitutional promises of equal protection and free expression under the law. In December 2017, SCOTUS agreed to take up a second gerrymandering case this term. The newer case from Maryland, *Benisek v. Lamone*, again concerns extreme partisan gerrymandering.

Both the Maryland case, where the claim is against Democratic gerrymandering, and the Wisconsin case, where the claim is against Republican gerrymandering, suggest to us that partisan gerrymandering should be a bipartisan concern.

And, what better group is there than the League of Women Voters at the national, state and local levels to take a leadership role, alongside other nonpartisan groups and experts, in redistricting and mapping?



Above map from [League of Women Voters of the Charleston Area](#)



Making Democracy Work

Message from the Co-President

When we enter a New Year, we must reflect on the times past. The League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area has much to look back on with pride.

With the annual theme, **Making Democracy Work**, we decided to invite the community in for some intimate conversations on Voting Rights and Barriers, Immigration concerns, Gerrymandering/ Redistricting, and "What's with the News – Fake or Not?" The League decided these issues needed more than the "window dressing" approach but time to drill down a bit to seek the **nerve** of why these issues are so thorny and difficult to talk about.



Dot Law

The **conversations** this past year were interesting and lively. However, the conversation that drew the largest audience was the one on Race. The audience was fully engaged and grappled with the topic from many points of view. Their comments were thoughtful and warm which made all feel welcomed and comfortable to participate in the stimulating conversation. This caused some to speak who had not planned to speak, but something someone said stirred them to add their voice to the mixture.

Sadly, despite the lapse in time and apparent racial victories gained, there is still much work needed to heal the racial divide of unreconciled differences in this country. With time and changes in the social climate, hopefully more people will share their opinions and have better solutions to the concerns in the future.

We look forward to the New Year, when we will be a year older and a bit wiser.

~Dot Law, Co-President

Job Opportunities: Get on Board!

At our Annual Meeting in May, our League members will vote for several new and/or continuing members of our board. The Nominating Committee is charged with developing a slate for consideration by the general membership. Nominations may also be made from the floor.

Four of our elected board position terms expire in June: Vice President/Program Chair, Treasurer, Voter Service Chair, and Observer Corps/Local Issues Chair. All other board-appointed committee chairs also expire in June

Please contact me, or another member of the Nominating Committee, if you are interested in serving in an elected or appointed position or would like to recommend someone else. Having held many different board positions, I can sincerely say that League board service is a really good experience. I think most past and current board members would agree that the work involved is rewarded by the feeling of having done something to help make democracy work and by the friendships made by working closely with other board members.

If we don't hear from you, don't be surprised if you are contacted by the Nominating Committee. Members are Joan Kinne-Shulman, Diane Neal and Flo Rosse.

~Fran Holt, Nominating Committee Chair
franholthhbl@gmail.com, 843-837-3436

Visit our website

www.lwhhi.org

Making Democracy Work by educating, engaging, and protecting voters and voters' rights.

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina (LWVSC), in conjunction with several other nonpartisan groups, including the NAACP, AARP and Conservation Voters of South Carolina (CVSC), have begun holding forums around the state, engaging the public about the process of redistricting so that voters are paying attention and are ready to act. This group has also been working with state legislators who are concerned about the impact of partisan gerrymandering in our state. And, **on December 13, 2017, a bill was prefiled and referred to the SC Committee on Judiciary to create an Independent Redistricting Commission (H4456), and we anticipate a second bill to establish the criteria for drawing voting district lines.**



Making
Democracy
Work

So, what can we do right now as local LWVHHI/BA members?

- **Educate ourselves and the public.** A number of our members, as well as an encouraging turnout of community members, participated in our November 8th Forum on Legislative Redistricting and Gerrymandering. Because of that forum, coupled with “word of mouth,” invitations from other community groups have been steadily coming for us to meet and provide forums for their members. If you know of community groups that might be interested in learning more and perhaps getting involved in this important issue, please have them contact me by email or phone, listed below.
- **Form a network of advocates to work together at the local level to make fair and equitable voting districts a reality.** A number of members signed up to join our newly created “LWVHHI/BA Redistricting Action Group.” An email will be sent out after the holidays announcing details of our organization meeting in January. **Save the Date: Monday, January 29, 3 PM.** Spread the word about the group, invite others to join us, and email me at the address below if you wish to attend.
- **Attend meetings and hearings, write letters, emails, sign petitions and speak out** about our concerns about gerrymandering and the need for an independent statewide commission, as well as the need for clear and enforceable criteria for voting districts. These are some of the things that we will work on within our redistricting action group.
- **Demand that public input and transparency** be present throughout the process of redistricting.
- **Advocate specifically on bills** for an independent commission and for voter-friendly criteria.
- **Stay nonpartisan.** This should not be about electing more people from a party.
- **Work on encouraging voter turnout**, starting with the primaries. It is the voters who make districts matter. One way to do this is to contact Ruth Wilwerding, LWVHHI/BA Voter Service Chair. She can be reached at: Ruth_Wilwerding@yahoo.com

Let’s start the New Year off with a bang and put ending gerrymandering at the top of our New Year’s Resolutions — and this one we will keep ☺. Looking forward to an exciting and productive year.

~MaryAnn Bromley, State Issues & Advocacy Chair
maryann.bromley@gmail.com, 843-298-2320



Show your love for redistricting in bumper sticker form!

This conversation-starting sticker was designed by Clemson League member and graphic designer Christine Prado to help raise awareness of the redistricting issue. Buy yours at the January 10 meeting for \$3, or get one for free with a contribution of \$10 or more to our redistricting activities.



Member Spotlight: Kathy Quirk



**Making
Democracy
Work**



*What really spoke to us
was Hilton Head's vitality,*

*the opportunities to get
engaged in meaningful
work that could make a
difference in people's lives,*

*and the ethic of giving
back that we saw in the
people we met.*

Kathy Quirk

How did you end up in the Lowcountry?

Having grown up in New York City and then having lived in several academic communities over the years, I am sometimes surprised to find myself living here in the Lowcountry—a place neither urban nor academic but a perfect fit for this time in my life.

When we decided to retire, my husband John and I tried out several places where the weather was better than in cold and snowy western Pennsylvania. We were drawn to the beauty of Hilton Head with its marshes and live oaks and brilliant waterways. But what really spoke to us was its vitality, the opportunities to get engaged in meaningful work that could make a difference in people's lives, and the ethic of giving back that we saw in the people we met. We got involved in Volunteers in Medicine and Literacy Volunteers of the Lowcountry and OLLI's lifelong learning at USCB. And we were hooked.

We sold our home in Pennsylvania, became full-time residents in 2008, and continued to find other great opportunities to get involved. I lost John to cancer in 2014 but this has continued to feel like the right place for me. It offers a great mix of opportunities to be out in nature and yet be challenged to connect with the community in helpful and productive ways.

What sparked your interest in civic engagement?

Civic engagement has always been in my DNA. This is probably connected to my family's core belief in the value of education and the importance of opportunity for all. We were a family whose grandparents came to this country from Ireland to build a better life for themselves and their children. It worked for us and we continued to trust in the process and in giving back.

In high school, I did the typical community volunteering like being a "candy striper" at the local hospital. In college, I moved on to social justice work in New York City and Mexico. I have always believed that democracy depends on certain basic institutions, including public schools and libraries, a belief confirmed when I worked in the schools in Harlem and then in rural Georgia as a grad student.

So, when my husband John and I finally settled into our career and family lives in Pennsylvania (he as a university faculty member and I as a practicing school psychologist and sometime academic), it was a natural move for me to work to support those institutions. I served on school board and other child-centered boards, chaired the Library Trustees, and just generally stayed active in my community. And along the way, I discovered the League of Women Voters which opened even wider doors for me.

Why the League?

I fell in love with the League as a young mother of three living in a rural community without adequate child care opportunities. I had left a position providing child psychological services because of that and saw the unique chance the League offered me to learn about issues that would affect our lives and our children's future.

Education Chair Kathy Quirk, while visiting her daughter in Paris this fall. With family across the country and Atlantic, Kathy proves that frequent travel and League activism can work!



(Continued on page 6)

“If your mother says she loves you, check it out!”

James Mallory, Guest Speaker, December 14

League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area

How can you tell the difference between real and “fake” news? That was the question sixty-three members and guests attending the League’s holiday luncheon on December 14 looked to James Mallory, retired Senior Managing Editor/VP News of *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, to answer.

Early American journalism frequently had a political bent, some of the most grievous being the “yellow journalism” published by the Hearst and Pulitzer papers in the late 1900’s, which in competing for readership exploited the Cuban revolution to whip up popular demand for war with Spain.

Sources of information have evolved over the years from print media to radio and television and in recent years have been exponentially expanded by a 24-hour news cycle, talk radio, the internet, bloggers, and social media. It is not uncommon for a news organization to report the news through a conservative or liberal lens (*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* was formed by the merger of the afternoon conservative *Journal* with the morning liberal *Constitution*), but a news outlet crosses the line when it has a political agenda. What passes for news, then, is propaganda.

What is a discerning reader to do? “If your mother tells you, she loves you, check it out,” according to Mallory. This is the advice given to new reporters, most of whom want to do a good and fair job in reporting the news. The best advice is to consider the source. News stories must be corroborated by more than one source. Even when sources remain anonymous, the editors must consider them credible. A rush to be the first to break a story can lead to misinformation.

Mallory also cautioned about mistaking the opinions of the “talking heads” on cable networks as news. The best way to be well-informed is to gather your news from more than one source. And when a news story sounds improbable, check it out through various fact-checking organizations.

Overall, Mallory stressed the importance of a free and independent press in safeguarding democracy. He urged us to defend the First Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees the freedom of the press, with the same fervor that opponents of gun control bring to their defense of the Second Amendment.



Making
Democracy
Work



Above, James Mallory reminds, “There is reason why the Founding Fathers placed freedom of speech and the press within the *First* Amendment to the United States Constitution.”

At left, Dot Law introduces the program and encourages attendance at the League’s January 10 meeting with Julie Hussey, Co-President, League of Women Voters of SC.



Making Democracy Work

(Member Spotlight Kathy Quirk, continued from page 4)

We were living on a small organic farm at the time and so I began with the environmental issues I was familiar with: land use, recycling, water and air quality. I studied and testified, worked on a state initiative to produce flood plain legislation, and collaborated with other groups to create and sustain the county's first recycling center. My work as a school psychologist, with a ten-month contract, gave me summers free and allowed me the flexibility to work on a lot of great projects. They were good years and I made wonderful friends. Old League of Women Voters friends from that time have continued their work and were recently at the center of the push for greater regulation of shale drilling in Pennsylvania.

As I've just described, friendship is a big part of why I love the League. I travel a lot. My three children, all with families of their own, live far away, two on the west coast and one in Paris. When I come home, I am glad to be rooted in this Hilton Head/Bluffton community where I have friendships based on shared values, a habit of studying issues and taking action, and an ethic of giving back. Participation in the League continues to be very important to me.

Where Does the Money Go?

Have you ever wondered about where your LWVHHI/BA dues go? Our League operates on a shoe-string budget—as does our state League, which also has no office or paid staff. When you join your local League, you are also joining the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of South Carolina and pay combined dues of \$46.

The remaining \$14 of your \$60 individual dues is used locally. Our biggest single expense is for volunteer leadership development. We will send a delegate to the LWVUS convention in Chicago and will send five or so board members to Columbia for the state Leadership, Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) in Columbia in January. The remainder of your dues support monthly programs, voter service activities, and our publications, publicity, and website.

However, dues alone do not cover all our costs, so we look to member contributions and occasional special events to make up the difference. Members can make an additional donation to our League at the time of membership renewal—or any time! Contact [Nancy Williams](#) for more information.

Thank You!

We recognize and thank the following members who have made donations to LWVHHI/BA so far in 2017-2018.

- Sally McGarry
- Barbara Catenaci
- Caroline McVitty
- Karen Wilber Wessel
- Linda and Tom Hennessey

Don't be left on the sideline. Get online!

SC Elections Commission Online Voter Registration
www.SCVotes.org

- Register to vote
- Update your registration
- Preview your ballot
- Request an absentee ballot

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/BLUFFTON AREA

PO. Box 23862
Hilton Head Island, SC 29925
www.LWVHHI.org
Find us on Facebook!

Questions about voting?
Beaufort County Board of
Voter Registration/Elections:
15 John Galt Rd.
Beaufort, SC 29906
voter@bcgov.net
843-255-6900

Thanks to your help to defray printing costs, the Voter Service Committee uses handy two-sided business cards like this one to direct voters to valuable online resources and to our local Voter Registration Office.



Welcome, New League Members!

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

We're delighted to officially recognize those who have recently joined the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area. Please help us welcome:

- Diana Heitman
- Tim Heitman
- Cynthia Lowe
- Glen Sutherland



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

www.LWVHHI.org

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**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

January 4 —Board Meeting, 10 AM, Palmetto Electric, Hilton Head Island

January 10— General Meeting, 10 AM, Hilton Head Public Service District Community Room. Guest: Julie Hussey, Co-President, League of Women Voters of South Carolina. See page 1.

January 15—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parades, Hilton Head Island and Bluffton. Check local media for details.

January 24—Education Committee Meeting, 10 AM, home of Kathy Quirk. Any member welcome. Contact Kathy at right to RSVP and for a gate pass.

January 27—LEAD day; state and local League reps gather in Columbia for Leadership, Education, and Advocacy Day

January 29—Redistricting Action Group, 3 PM. See pages 1, 3. Email or call MaryAnn Bromley to attend.

OFFICERS

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

DIRECTORS

Communications:	
Sandy Stern, Chair	843-342-4834
Heather Bragg, Asst. Chair	843-415-3490
Education:	
Kathy Quirk	843-836-2892
Membership:	
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 the next League event. Better yet, do all three!

Questions? Contact Membership Chair Ellen Dahl, shown 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