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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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Volume 37, Number 9
October 2009

LWVCA President: Della Baker
The Voter Editor: Catherine Mobley

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tues., October 20	LWVCA General Membership Meeting, "Sustainable Energy" Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson, 226 Pendleton Rd., Clemson, 7 p.m. – Social; 7:30 p.m. – Meeting (See page 2 for more details about this meeting.)
Thurs., October 22	LWVCA Board Meeting, Clemson City Council Chambers, 5:00 p.m.
Tues., October 27	LWVCA-Sponsored Candidate Forum for the City of Central Elections, 7:00-8:45 p.m., Central City Hall (see page 3).
Thurs., October 29	LWVCA Book Discussion Group, George Lakoff's book <i>Don't Think Like an Elephant</i> . At the home of Holley Ulbrich, 106 Highland Drive, Clemson (see page 3 for more details).

WATCH DEMOCRACY AT WORK

Clemson City Council	1st and 3rd Monday, 7:30 p.m.
Seneca City Council	2 nd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Pickens County Council	1 st and 3 rd Monday, 7:00 p.m.
Oconee County Council	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Anderson County Council	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday, 6:00 p.m.
Pickens County School Board	4th Monday, 7:30 p.m. (except July and December)
Oconee County School Board	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Anderson County School Board	3 rd Monday, 6:00 p.m.
LWV National Office	202-429-1965 (800-424-2937 for state/ local board members)
LWVCA website	http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/

President's Message

Dear LWVCA Members and Friends,

In last month's message, I said that we would be *hitting the ground running* for the Fall season and we have. The Membership Team hosted a great new member and prospective member welcome activity on August 26th which marked the 89th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution. Thanks to all who contributed and participated to make this event a success.

The Program and Action Team conducted the first general meeting for this year, which focused on school district governance. You will be hearing more throughout the year as a result of efforts initiated during the meeting. As this newsletter goes to press, the Team is preparing for the first Hot Topics Luncheon session on growth management in Pickens County. Two more sessions are planned – one for Anderson County and one for Oconee County.

LWVCA has become an Oconee By Choice Vision Partner to support natural resource conservation. You will see more details in this newsletter.

The LWVCA President was contacted by SC Fair Share and invited to attend a meeting to offer input about health care issues in the Upstate area. Some 20 people representing AARP, Senior Solutions, Anderson Chamber of Commerce, and other profit and non-profit groups were present. Carol Ward, Membership Chair, and I represented LWVCA. Major concerns were expressed about high health care costs, the number of uninsured people needing health care, health care access, and other issues. Participants reported a need for local coalitions to be formed so that citizens could voice their concerns in an informed matter. These coalitions would give a voice to those previously unheard and would be a way to reach legislators and other decision makers.

You may know that we have supported the efforts of SC Fair Share in the past. Our missions are compatible. SC Fair Share is a non-partisan, statewide membership group that investigates policy issues, educates the public about solutions, and organizes for reform that focuses on everyday people. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, which encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters believes quality affordable health care should be available to all Americans. If you have not done so already, contact your US Congress representative to let your voice be heard on the topic of health care.

Finally, let the celebrations begin! LWV is turning 90 years young in 2010! February 14th will mark the League of Women Voters' 90th birthday. If you are interested in sharing both personal and League stories as an integral part of the 90th Anniversary, you may do so by submitting your story via the LWVUS website or emailing it to storybank@lww.org.

Della A. Baker
LWVCA President

**LWVCA October General Meeting:
Sustainable Energy:
Including Nuclear Power and
Modification of the Electricity Grid
Tuesday, October 20**

Our October 20th meeting will present an overview of sustainable energy sources. We have relied heavily on David MacKay's book, *Sustainable Energy –Without the Hot Air*, in understanding the relative potential contribution of wind, solar, geothermal, nuclear and other sources of energy. In his analysis of energy usage, Dr. MacKay concludes that "North America needs solar in its own deserts or nuclear power, or both." Dr. MacKay is Professor of Physics at the University of Cambridge in Great Britain. In South Carolina we have abundant offshore wind energy, which may be utilized.

If we are to use solar power generated in our deserts, we must decrease energy losses in transmission. We must also modify the electricity grid in order to use energy more efficiently. Dr. Lewis Fitch, Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering, will talk about the electricity grid, needed changes to that grid and transportation of electrical energy across the grid.

James (Jim) Snowden, retired operations manager at Duke Energy, will talk about water-cooled nuclear reactors, pumped storage conservation, other types of reactors, and the problems associated with nuclear waste. The League of Women Voters has no position on the use of nuclear energy, but is concerned with environmental consequences of waste disposal.

~Submitted by Eleanor Hare

**Welcome Back Party
for New LWVCA Members**

The League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area attracts talented, active members from our community, as we discovered at the New Member Gathering at Maryalice Mayberry's house on August 26, 2009. Our two new members are Sandy McLeod and Cheryl Lee, both retired public school teachers.

Cheryl Lee was a member of the League years ago, but her teaching and working schedule made it difficult to participate actively in the meetings. She began her teaching career as a high school teacher. Through additional training and education, Cheryl became the Assistant Principal at Liberty Middle School. She has volunteered in the Democratic Party locally and enjoys playing tennis.

Sandy McLeod also taught locally in Pickens and even in Greenville before retiring from Hanna High School in Anderson. Sandy loved working in the labs when she taught chemistry. In labs she got a terrific chance to work with students solving chemical problems. Sandy was glad she retired when she did since the schools began to cut budgets and put more work on the regular teachers. She doesn't want to substitute teach, but she has ventured into some tutoring of students in science.

The League is lucky to have these two new members in our ranks. We are eager to have Cheryl and Sandy participate in our meetings and other programs in the future. The League is stronger because of them.

~ Submitted by Carol Ward, Membership Chair

**A Report on the
LWVCA September Meeting
on School Governance**

Eighteen people, including at least one brand-new member, showed up for the September meeting on our new school governance study. We discussed the particular situations in Pickens (loss of at large school board members), Anderson (considering consolidation and other options), and Oconee (okay for now, but still has people wanting to go back to an elected superintendent). The school governance issue is about democracy, about home rule, about asking the legislative delegation to let go of its control and let the people of the district and/or county decide. If you couldn't attend the meeting, there is a list of questions/issues on the LWVCA website (<http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/>).

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

**Calling all Bookworms:
Join us for the next
LWVCA Book Discussion!**

In October, the LWVCA will host its fifth book discussion event. The book is George Lakoff's *Don't Think of an Elephant*. It's really helpful in doing advocacy work to think more about framing issues, and that's what this book is about. Short, inexpensive, and full of good insights and war stories!

The discussion will be held over wine and cheese at the home of Holley Ulbrich (106 Highland Drive in Clemson) on Thursday, October 29th at 4:30 p.m. Come prepared for a lively discussion (as has happened with all our previous books) and some good social time.

For the Spring book discussion, we have selected Thomas Truitt's *Going Up the River of Shame*, an account of the Abbeville school case (recommended by Eleanor). Truitt's book is a good fit with our education emphasis this year.

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

**LWVCA Candidate Forum
for the City of Central Election**

The LWVCA will conduct a candidate forum for the November 3, 2009, Central city election. The event will be held in the Central City Hall's public meeting room on Tuesday, October 27, 2009, from 7:00 to 8:45 pm.

Candidates for Mayor are Clyde J. Martin and David Donald. Candidates for Council are Sara Paige Bowers; Alton Benjamin Cumbie, IV; Jerry Turner; Joe N. Moss; John Wallace Palmer, Jr.; Tracey Reynolds; and Kenneth Dill.

Candidates have been presented with three general questions about their qualifications and concerns. Answers will be posted on the League's website (found at: <http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/>).

~ Submitted by Bill Hare

Be Counted in 2010!

The US Census Bureau has issued a call to action for every resident of our nation to be counted in 2010. The Bureau is seeking to partner with local community governments, community-based organizations, schools, media, businesses and others to ensure a complete and accurate 2010 Census. The Census Bureau will provide promotional materials, regular updates and data assistance to partners to assist in this effort.

The 2010 Census is important. It determines the distribution of more than \$300 billion annually of government funding for critical community services, generates thousands of jobs across the country, and impacts your voice in Congress. LWVCA has agreed to become a 2010 Census Complete Count Partner. To support the census count, we will be:

- Including census articles or messages in our newsletters
- Allowing the Census Bureau to post our organization's name on the 2010 Census Web site

- Linking to the 2010 Census web site from the LWVCA Web site
- Allowing a presentation by a Census Bureau staff person
- Using and distributing educational materials during our general meetings, forums, and other public meetings

~Submitted by Della Baker

Some Insights on the Topic of Finance and Taxation

Editor's Note: One way of increasing the visibility of the LWVCA is through writing op-ed/ editorial pieces for local and regional (and national?) newspapers. Earlier this year, LWVCA President, Della Baker submitted a letter-to-the-editor on the topic of health care reform and Eleanor Hare submitted an op-ed on voting machines. Below, Holley Ulbrich explains her experience in submitting an editorial to the Pickens Sentinel. We encourage our members to follow their examples!

Our quarterly editorial in the Pickens Sentinel is by Holley Ulbrich on the Index of Taxpaying Ability. It's a complex but important issue from the standpoint of equitable funding of education. If you don't read the Pickens Sentinel, check the LWVCA website or the Strom Thurmond Institute web site for a slightly different version. There's also an article on the Strom Thurmond Institute web site on another important looming issue that is important to all local governments, point of sale. When the assessment caps were put on real property (no more than 15% increase in assessed value over a five year period), an exception was made for transfers of property (other than by inheritance or within the family), at which point the property goes on the books at the new sale price. There is pressure from the real estate industry to eliminate that exception, which will take away one of the few remaining sources of growth in the property tax base. LWVSC is opposed, but the legislation has passed the House and will come up in the Senate in January.

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

LWVCA Endorses the Oconee County Vision Plan

The Board of LWVCA voted to endorse the Oconee County Vision Plan (Oconee by Choice 2028). The Plan includes protection of the beautiful natural environment; preservation of the lakes and rivers; protection of the small town and rural feeling of the county; creation of wildlife sanctuaries; preservation of the farms and rural countryside; protection of natural green spaces and historic sites; and preservation of the healthy community with clean air and water.

The Board also voted to sign a petition in support of the establishment of the Oconee County Conservation Bank. The petition will be presented to the Oconee County Council urging them to take immediate steps to establish and administer the Oconee County Conservation Bank in order to provide a dedicated source of funding of no less than \$1M a year for the protection of the county's natural, cultural and historic sites.

~Submitted by Reggie Turetzky



Pictured above are some members of the LWVCA Membership Committee, hard at work planning the events for the upcoming year. Pictured above are Michelle Chin (on the left), Aleta Robinson (back right) and Arlene Stewart (front right). Missing from the photo, but still "in action" and active on the Membership Committee, are Carol Ward (Committee Chair) and Paula Appling.

A Special Event for League Members in the Upstate ~ Reminder from Last Month:

Join other LWV members in the Upstate for the following special event: *“Democracy Challenged: How Big Money in Politics, Influences Who Runs for Office, Who Wins and What They Do Once Elected.”* to be held on **Wednesday, October 28th, 7:00 p.m., Riley Institute at Furman University.** Presented by Dr. Hodding Carter, University Professor of Public Policy and Leadership at UNC-Chapel Hill. Dr. Hodding worked on two successful presidential campaigns, those of Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and Jimmy Carter in 1976 for whom he later served as State Department spokesman, most notably during the Iran hostage crisis. More information can be found at the following website: <http://www.furman.edu/riley/> *~Submitted by Eleanor Hare*

Note from Editor: Below you will find an announcement reminding you to pay LWVCA dues – a gentle reminder for you to send in your check if you haven’t already done so. Thank you!

According to our By-Laws, all dues should be paid by September. While individuals may join LWVCA at different times throughout the year, all membership renewals are due in September. However, if you have joined LWVCA since June 1st, you do not need to send another check.

Dues are \$50 per year; dues for a second member of the same household is half price! (\$75 total). Student membership is \$25 per year. Please send your dues to the following address: LWV of the Clemson Area P.O. Box 802 Clemson SC 29633-0802. Additional contributions are always needed and most welcome. Our budget projects \$500 in member contributions. So, please be generous. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. *~Submitted by Alice Flower*

You can support the LWVCA with a tax deductible donation to the League of Women Voters Education Fund! Such gifts sponsor public education projects allowing our League to support activities like the candidate forums and the publication of the Directory of Public Officials for the three surrounding counties. Simply, write a check to *League of Women Voters Education Fund* (LWV Education Fund) and mail your check, along with the gift form below, to:

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area
P.O. Box 802 Clemson, SC 29633-0802

Yes, I would like to support the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area!

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____ to the LWV Education Fund.

Name_____ Are you currently a LWVCA member? _____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip Code_____

Phone number_____ E-mail_____

- Please send me more information about LWVCA and LWVCA events.
- Please send me more information about how I can become more involved with LWVCA.