



THE VOTER

October 2014 Vol. 41 No. 7

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

Co-President's Message

Here we go again. Another arrest of an NFL player, this one from Arizona, was announced this morning for alleged domestic violence against his wife and child, breaking his wife's nose and throwing a shoe at his 18 month old child. We know all too well that this type of domestic violence is also happening in South Carolina.

The Charleston Post and Courier reported in a recent article titled "Till death do us part" that "More than 300 women were shot, stabbed, strangled, beaten, bludgeoned or burned to death over the past decade by men in South Carolina". There are approximately 36,000 cases of domestic abuse in our state per year and approximately 380 women turned away from shelters due to lack of space. These gruesome statistics give us the notorious ranking of #2 in the nation for cases of domestic abuse, men killing women. This is not much improvement over our #1 standing in the nation last year for domestic violence.

We have to ask ourselves what it is about South Carolina that causes this violent behavior in its population. Recently, a National Institutes of Health publication stated that one fourth to one half of men who commit acts of domestic violence also have a substance abuse problem. That might lead us to think that SC citizens must also have a higher than average rate of substance abuse. Not so according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health. South Carolina has one of the lowest rates in the nation for alcohol and illicit drug use. Unfortunately, this study also ranked SC among the highest in the country for unmet drug treatments (those needing treatment but not receiving). So therein might lay a second problem. Perhaps SC needs to improve its screening and treatment of those having substance abuse issues. A study in the UK reported in the open access journal PLoS ONE that women with mental illness such as depression or anxiety were 2.5 to 3.5 times more likely to be victims of domestic abuse. It seems to me that a woman living with abuse might suffer from depression or anxiety due to her home environment, rather than abuse being caused by her mental condition.

So what are we doing in South Carolina to combat this sad condition in our state? House members in an *ad hoc* committee met with domestic violence experts and advocates in mid-September to hear testimony and exchange ideas on what can be done to curb this violence against women. The committee will hear from the public on October 7. This is the same day as the Silent Witness Ceremony, which is held on Statehouse grounds, and honors people who are affected by domestic violence. The organization of this House *ad hoc* committee to study domestic violence in our state is a hopeful beginning and certainly something that the LWV Clemson Area might want to consider embracing.

Yours in League,

Sandra



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THE VOTER

League of Women Voter Clemson Area
P. O. Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633
www.lwvclemsonarea.org

Sandra Gray, Co-President
Janie Shipley, Co-President
Holley Ulbrich, VP/Program & Action
Diana Stafford, Secretary
Bill Hare, Treasurer

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Photo Credits: Eleanor Hare, Mike Stafford

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sat, Oct 4	Last day to Register to Vote in the November 2014 General Election
Mon, Oct 6	Public Candidate Forum for Oconee County School Board, District 1 at Duke Energy's World of Energy Auditorium, Oconee Nuclear Station, 6:30 p.m.
Tues, Oct 14	BOARD MEETING , Clemson City Hall, 5:00 pm
Wed, Oct 15	Public Candidate Forum for Pickens County School Board , District 2 at Council Chambers, Central Town Hall, Central, 7 p.m.
Thurs, Oct 30	Public Candidate Forum for Clemson City Council at Council Chambers, Clemson City Hall, Clemson, 7 p.m.

Review of September Meeting

The September meeting of the Clemson LWV featured Donna London, executive director of the Jim Self Center on the Future at Clemson University, explaining the city planning process and opportunities for citizen input. Donna urged citizens to pay more attention to the Planning Commission, where recommendations are developed for the approval of City Council. Concerned citizens should also be on the lookout for pending appointments by City Council to the Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Board of Architectural Review and apply or encourage others to apply for those appointments. It is also important to attend public hearings on proposed zoning changes and variances to make your voice heard. At those hearings, citizens should be aware that the proposed particular use of a property when zoning is changed is not necessarily the one that will finally take place, as long as the final use is one that is in accord with the zoning requirements. Eternal vigilance is the price of a well-planning, resident-friendly community!

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich



OCTOBER – NO GENERAL MEETING

No General Meeting is scheduled for October. Instead, learn about the candidates you will be voting for in November. Currently scheduled public candidate forums are listed above in the Calendar of Events. Other public candidate forums are in development and you can find out pertinent information at our website at lwclemsonarea.org.

Looking To November

School funding in South Carolina has changed dramatically in the last decade. Along with the ups and downs of the national economy we have seen underfunding of the Education Finance Act, reduced assessments on cars, Act 388, lagging sales tax revenue to fund the Educational improvement Act. Per pupil funding is down statewide, but the change in the funding mix means that some districts made out much better than others. We will look at how Oconee, Pickens, and Anderson county schools have fared relative to the rest of the state and what needs to be changed.

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

**Ask your favorite shop-keeper to be a
PATRIOTIC PARTNER!**

Fund Raising

Fundraising within our membership is like preaching to the choir, but Bill's article ("DUES are DUE!" this page) describes the necessity: only 25% of the dues you pay is available for local activities. And while we do appreciate active members for their contributions of time, effort and wisdom and the non-active members for their show of support and affirmation of the League mission, funding is needed to carry out the many activities we perform.

Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the formative members of the League of Women Voters, advocated for freedom and equality. It is very hard to not see the same issues still in need of continual education and promotion.

Please consider making a donation. Our mission is a vital one.

Thank you.

Submitted by Mike Stafford

PHOTO ID?

A photo ID is not required to vote at the polls in South Carolina. If you do not have one of the accepted forms of photo ID, tell the poll manager that you could not get one and show your non-photo voter registration card.

The poll manager will ask you to select a reason that you could not get a photo ID from a list on an envelope and sign the envelope. You will vote on a paper ballot, which will be placed in the envelope. This ballot will be counted unless someone proves to the election commission that the voter is lying.

Some of the reasons a citizen might not have a photo ID are disability, illness, conflict with work schedule, lack of transportation, lack of a birth certificate, family responsibilities and other (any reason the voter thinks is reasonable).

A photo ID is also not required of citizens who vote using an absentee ballot.

Submitted by Eleanor Hare

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to new members Elizabeth Adams and Anna Simon! Anna is an award winning journalist and author, occasional co-host for Your Day on SC ETV Radio and an avid equestrian. She looks forward to becoming part of an organization that presents unbiased, relevant information in a timely manner. Elizabeth is a musician. Her group, **Six Chickens and a Beer**, plays old timey music, a little Celtic and a little blues. She also teaches Women's Studies at Clemson. When she retires, she hopes to get more involved with forums and attending council meetings.

DUES are DUE!

Annual dues for 2014-15 are payable beginning June 1 and will be in arrears at the end of December. Our fiscal year is June 1 to May 31. Dues are \$60 per person with an additional \$30 for other members of the same household. Please make your dues check payable to "LWVCA".

Contributions to the Ed Fund are tax-deductible and must be submitted in a separate check to "LWV Education Fund". Checks to the Ed Fund are forwarded directly to our account with LWVUS. We can use Ed Fund monies for national PMP (up to one-half of our annual amount), state PMP (up to one-quarter of our annual amount) and other educational efforts.

From our \$60 dues, only \$15 per person (\$7.50 per additional person) is available for local activities. Most of this amount is already committed to publishing the **VOTER** newsletter. This year, we are actively seeking additional funds to augment further activities.

Please mail any membership or contribution checks to:

LWVCA, PO Box 802, Clemson, SC 29633

Submitted by Bill Hare

Watch SC Legislature *live* when in session!
www.scstatehouse.gov/studentpage/What/LiveBroadcast.shtml

2014 General Elections: Ballot Questions

City of Clemson Ballot Question

Sunday Alcohol Sales Permit Referendum: Shall the South Carolina Department of Revenue be authorized to issue temporary permits in this Clemson, SC for a period not to exceed twenty-four hours to allow the possession, sale, and consumption of alcoholic liquors by the drink to bona fide nonprofit organizations and business establishments otherwise authorized to be licensed for consumption-on-premises sales?

Refer to: pickenselections.org/2014/07/30/2014-general-elections-offices-and-candidates/

Oconee County Ballot Questions

Alcohol Sales Referendum: “Shall the SC Department of Revenue be authorized to issue temporary permits in Oconee County for a period not to exceed twenty-four hours to allow the possession, sale, and consumption of alcoholic liquors by the drink to bona fide nonprofit organizations and business establishments authorized to be licensed for consumption-on-premises sales and to allow the sale of beer and wine at permitted off-premises locations without regard to the days or hours of sales?

Capital Project Sales and Use Tax Referendum: Must a special one percent sales and use tax be imposed in Oconee County, SC for not more than eight years from the date of imposition to raise amounts specified for nine specified projects? Read Ellis Hughes’ article “Oconee County Capital Projects Sales and Use Tax Referendum” on page 6.

Grateful acknowledgement goes to Oconee County Elections Commission for providing information. Look for exact wording at scvotes.org -> Get My Ballot.

Anderson County Ballot Questions

Education Capital Improvements Sales and Use Tax Act Referendum for Anderson County: Must a special one percent sales and use tax be imposed in Anderson County for not more than fifteen years with revenue of the tax used to provide property tax relief and to support the cost of education capital improvement projects (specified) in Anderson County?

In the event that the Referendum is approved, Shall the Board of Trustees of School District (3, 4 or 5) be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds of specified amounts, the proceeds applied to defray the cost of specified projects? Grateful acknowledgement goes to Anderson County Elections Commission for providing information. Look for exact wording at scvotes.org-> Get My Ballot.

See the Calendar of Events for currently scheduled public candidate forums and keep up with developments at our website at lwvclemsonarea.org

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT QUESTIONS

Amendment 1

Should the Constitution of SC be changed to allow certain nonprofit organizations to conduct raffles and use the proceeds for charitable, religious or educational purposes? A “No” vote maintains the current law that considers a raffle to be a lottery and is prohibited.

Amendment 2

Should the Constitution of this State be amended so that, beginning in 2018, the Governor with consent of the Senate would appoint the Adjutant General? The General Assembly will set the term, duties, compensation and qualifications for office and procedures by which appointment is made and how an Adjutant General can be removed from office. A “No” vote would maintain the current method of electing an Adjutant General.

Refer to: scvotes.org/2014/08/06/2014_constitutional_amendment_questions for exact wording. Also, read Holley’s article “Electing the Adjutant General” on page 5 for food for thought.

Electing the Adjutant General

South Carolina voters have two constitutional referenda on the ballot this fall, one on charity raffles and one on changing the office of Adjutant General from elected to appointed. The Adjutant General is the head of the National Guard. Currently, South Carolina is the only state to elect its Adjutant General, as specified in the 1895 constitution. If voters approve this proposal, the General Assembly will have to fill in the details with legislation concerning the term of office, the qualifications, and other matters. But the bottom line is that the governor would propose a candidate and the Senate would have to confirm the nominee, much like cabinet officers at the federal level.

The issue of electing versus appointing is a thorny one. Some states elect most of their judges; in South Carolina, we elect only probate judges, while the rest are screened by a commission and then elected by the legislature. In other states, officers such as Attorney General, Treasurer, and Superintendent of Education are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of one or both houses of the legislature; in South Carolina we elect them, as well as the Comptroller General and the Secretary of Agriculture.

You would think that if electing were a good thing, electing more would be a better thing, but not necessarily. Voters' attention is easily distracted toward such mundane matters as earning a living, raising the children, paying the bills and mowing the grass. The more offices we have to vote for, the less time and attention we have to give to any one particular office.

South Carolina voters often arrive at the polls braced to vote for legislators and senators and the governor and members of Congress, only to find a whole bunch of other people on the ballot about whom they know little or nothing. Voters also don't really know a lot about the relevant qualifications for some of these offices. Just ask the average voter about the duties of the Comptroller General and how they are different from those of the Treasurer. Or at the local level, how they choose between competing candidates for coroner.

Finally, there is the matter of accountability. Short of illegal activity, elected officials are accountable only to the voters, and it's hard to keep a close eye on all of them. Appointed officials are usually accountable to the governor, although she (or he) may not have the power to dismiss them without due cause.

If voters approve this proposal, the General Assembly will have to fill in the details with legislation concerning the term of office, the qualifications, and other matters. The governor would propose a candidate but the Senate would have to confirm the nominee, much like cabinet officers at the federal level.

The proposal specifically says that the term of the Adjutant General is not exactly the same as that of the governor, making that person somewhat independent of the current governor. The governor would not be able to fire the Adjutant General without an acceptable reason. The acceptable reasons must be spelled out in the legislation that has to be enacted to put this proposal into effect. So there are safeguards. But ultimately it comes down to whether we can trust the voters to make the effort to make a lot of decisions or whether we are willing to trust the governor and the Senate by delegating some of those choices to them.

Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

In South Carolina, you can Register To Vote online at:
www.scvotes.org/south_carolina_voter_registration_information
2014 General Election Deadline to register to vote: October 4

Letter to the Editor

Oconee County Capital Projects Sales Tax Referendum

Oconee County has been growing in population for many years. Investment in quality of life opportunities has not. Example: The last new library construction was 35 years ago — long before the Internet. Recreation facilities/needs for seniors and young people are not being met.

Things change. Needs continue to grow. Investment is required to provide the quality of life and jobs our citizens deserve. The Capital Projects Sales Tax Referendum proposes to fund nine projects:

- Seneca Library
- YMCA Indoor Recreation and Aquatic Facility
- Foothills Agricultural Resource and Marketing (FARM) Center
- Westminster Library renovation/expansion
- Golden Corner Community Center/Library
- Tamasee/Salem Recreation Center/Library
- Walhalla Library renovation
- Oconee Heritage Center multi-site renovation
- Northern water line extension

We all have concerns about where tax dollars go. The South Carolina Capital Projects Sales Tax referendum addresses many of these worries.

- Sets a 1-cent tax for bonding/funding nine **specific** capital projects.
- Designates revenue only for these projects. **By state law.**
- Limits its 'life' to 8 years. **By state law.**
- Paid for tourists and non-residents as well as residents.

The positive energy of these construction projects will reflect on all of Oconee as well as individuals and businesses seeking new opportunities.

With a November YES vote, work would start on the nine projects which total **\$36.4 million** in construction. By Fall 2015, this major economic development could be providing hundreds of new jobs.

For more information, email oconeereferenduminfo@gmail.com OR go to the Oconee County Public Library website: <http://oconeelibrary.org/information-about-the-oconee-county-sales-tax-referendum/>

Also, two information sessions have been organized by the Greater Oconee County Chamber of Commerce: Sept. 26, 9 am at Walhalla Civic Auditorium and Oct. 27, 5 pm at Gignilliat Center in Seneca.

Submitted by Ellis Hughes

Read Lynn Teague's blog post about the abuse of public trust in South Carolina at govt.statehousereport.com/2014/09/it-isnt-all-about-bobby-harrell/

Southern Poverty Law Center

One Person, ONE VOTE

The Southern Poverty Law Center, a nonprofit civil rights organization, fights bigotry and seeks justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. Toward that end, the SPLC will send a film kit *One Person, ONE VOTE* to more than 50,000 schools, free of charge in 2015. At the LWVCA Board meeting in September, board members voted to donate \$100 in exchange for a preview copy and having our name listed in the credits. Learn more about the SPLC at www.splcenter.org.

On
September
23, we
celebrated
democracy
in America
with
National
Voter
Registration



PATRIOTIC PARTNERS

"Patriotic Partners" is a joint effort among the business community, churches, schools and the League of Women Voters to remind citizens to vote in the elections on November 4. We ask participating groups to post the words

VOTE NOVEMBER 4

on their signs on or before November 4. This posting should not advocate for any candidate or party.

Submitted by Eleanor Hare

Energiewende

Germany may be the current world leader in *energiewende*, or *the energy transition*, but other locations too are joining the movement that is threatening the traditional utilities businesses and beginning to have an impact on global warming. Read the entire article here: www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/science/earth/sun-and-wind-alter-german-landscape-leaving-utilities-behind.html

OBSERVER CORPS

SENECA CITY COUNCIL: *LIVE STREAMED!*

The regular meeting of City of Seneca Council is held the second Tuesday of the month at 6 pm. A monthly City of Seneca work session is held the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6 pm. These meetings are now available for viewing in real time or recorded time through Live Stream. Meetings are also archived for viewing anytime. To access or replay a meeting go to www.seneca.sc.us and click on the Council Meetings Live Stream and Archives button on the left side of the page. This will take you directly to the Seneca Live Stream page where you can click on any City of Seneca council meeting. Additionally, meetings are available for viewing Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday at 8:00 pm on Northland Cable Channel 4. Now anyone can participate in the LWV Clemson Area Observer Corps for the City of Seneca Council meetings.

Submitted by Sandra Gray

Clemson City Council 1st and 3rd Monday, 7:30 pm.Seneca City Council 2nd Tuesday, 7:00 pm.Pickens County Council 1st and 3rd Monday, 7:00 pm.Oconee County Council 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm.

Anderson County Council

Pickens County School Board

Oconee County School Board

Anderson Co. School Board

1st and 3rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm4th Monday, 7:30 pm.3rd Monday, 6:00 pm.3rd Monday, 6:00 pm

Contribution Form

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Phone (opt) _____

_____ I wish my contribution to remain anonymous.

_____ I wish my contribution to be tax deductible where allowed by law. My check is made out to the "*League of Women Voters Ed Fund*" which is a 501(c)(3) organization.

_____ I wish to support the League's action priorities. My check is made out to the "League of Women Voters" and is not tax-deductible.

League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

P. O. Box 802

Clemson, SC 29633