



LEAGUE LINES

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www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Editor Suzanne Rhodes / Co-editor Sej Harman

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October 2013

CALENDAR & NEWS

OCTOBER

- 3 (Th)** "Forms & Powers of Municipal Government in SC" - 5:30 PM (p. 7)
- 4 (F)** Seagrove: Traditions in Clay
Closing reception & departmental open house
– McMaster College at USC (p. 6)
- 7 (M)** Board Meeting – 5 PM – Lourie Center
- 10 (Th)** Conservation Common Agenda (p. 4)
- 16 (W)** SC Public Education Partners (p. 6)
- 17 (Th)** Public Policy Luncheon
RICHLAND LIBRARY BOND REFERENDUM
(see *RIGHT*; also "The Prez Says," p. 2)
- 17 (Th)** Panel: Pros & Cons of Forms of Government for Columbia, SC - 5:30 PM (p. 7)
- 21 (M)** Candidates Forum – co-sponsored by LWVCA & the Columbia Sertoma Club
11:30 AM at Dupres (at end of Senate St.)
- 24 (Th)** LWV Columbia Consensus Meeting on City of Columbia Form of Government
Cooper Branch of Richland Library
6:00 PM (p. 7)

NOVEMBER

- 4 (M)** Board Meeting – 5 PM – Lourie Center
- 5 (Tu)** ELECTION DAY: Richland County Bond Referendum. Also municipal elections for Columbia, Irmo, Blythewood & Arcadia Lakes.
- 21 (Th)** Public Policy Luncheon
URBAN FARMING, FORAGING & PERMACULTURE

DECEMBER

- 3 (Tu)** SPECIAL ELECTION to decide City of Columbia Form of Government
To Be Announced Holiday Gathering

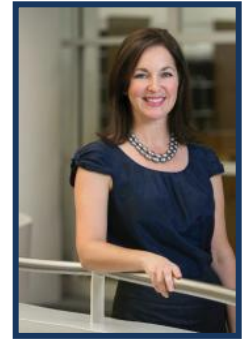
Public Policy Luncheon

Thursday, October 17 – 11:45 AM

"Richland Library Bond Referendum"

Speaker: Melanie Huggins,
Executive Director - Richland Library

Melanie Huggins, executive director of the Richland County Public Library (now re-branded Richland Library), will address the library's proposed \$59 million county bond referendum. In August, Richland County Council voted to place the referendum question on the November 5th ballot. If approved by voters, increased property taxes will fund improvements to the county's library branches.



Library officials are making the case that the main library and branches serve more citizens than ever before, and the last library bond referendum was approved in 1989. Ms. Huggins will explain the financial impact of the library bond, proposed expansion of services, and upgrades to library branches if the bond is approved in November.

A Columbia native with a master's degree in library science from the University of South Carolina. Huggins replaced David Warren when he retired in 2009, returning home after serving as director of the St. Paul (Minn.) Public Library for three years, and most of the previous ten years at the Charlotte Mecklenburg (N.C.) Library. Well respected in professional circles, Huggins was named the 2012 South Carolina Outstanding Librarian by the South Carolina Library Association.

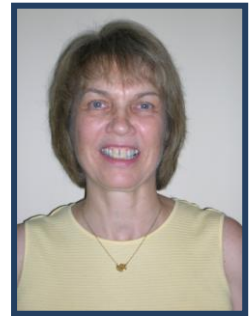
Lunch will be catered by **Food For Thought** caterers, who provided lunch for the September PPL. Lunch is from **11:45 to noon**; presentation begins at noon. Lunch is \$10, or you may brown bag it.

RSVP, please, with with

SusanBJames@sc.rr.com or 256-6822

The Prez Says...**Martha Roblee**

Fall 2013 is turning into a very exciting election season for the Columbia League and I wish to thank all the members who volunteered to assist *Shirley Geiger* and our **Voter Services Committee** and *Pat Forbis* and *Lynn Teague* with our **Forms of City Government Committee**. With all the publicity and debate surrounding the issue of whether or not to place the question of changing the form of Columbia's government on the November ballot, it is easy to forget that Richland County voters will also have an opportunity to have their say on another very important referendum—the request by the Richland Library for voters to approve a bond to fund renovations and additions to library facilities.



Your Board of Directors applied long-standing LWV public policy positions at the state and national levels in giving its approval to **support the Richland Library bond referendum**, including, but not limited to:

- **Child Welfare** – support of programs and policies that ensure quality services, personnel, financing, and training at all levels of government in order to meet the needs of children and families. The new funding for the Richland Library will ensure every branch can give its customers access to programs and technology they wouldn't otherwise have and improve education and reduce illiteracy.
- **Early Intervention for Children at Risk** – support programs and policies that promote the well-being, development and safety for all children. Funding from the bond referendum will help enhance library programs that are aimed at reducing dropout rates and keeping youth off the streets.
- **Adult Education** – adult education programs which are accessible to residents throughout each county in South Carolina and local adult education partnerships with community organizations and other governmental entities to assist in carrying out the mission of adult education. The new funding will support library programs that educate those at risk of becoming criminals by improving adult reading levels.
- **Employment** – support of programs at all levels of government to provide equality of opportunity for employment for all persons in the U.S. and encourage the participation of private institutions. The Richland Library provides job training services and plays a role in connecting job seekers with employers in the community and, with additional resources, will be able to expand its role in reducing county employment rates.
- **State and Local Taxation** – support for a system of state and local taxation in SC that is equitable and provides adequate revenue for public purposes. Voter approved bonds are the only way the Richland Library can obtain the substantial funds required for its capital intensive needs.
- **Resource Management** – natural resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. The Richland Library will follow green building guidelines and sustainable practices to generate energy savings for all locations.

As you can see, there are plenty of reasons for the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area to support a “yes” vote for the bond referendum on the November 5th ballot to fund the capital needs of the Richland Library.

Martha

NOTE: For those interested in more details about various articles and items in an issue of *League Lines*, PDFs may be included as attachments to the email. Attachments will be noted in the individual articles. Please feel free to browse at your leisure.

COLUMBIA'S GOVERNMENT: FORM AND FUNCTION Lynn Teague

The LWV of the Columbia Area has taken a leadership role in informing the public about the proposal to change the City of Columbia's form of government. The issue is whether Columbia should retain its current Council-Manager form of government or change to a Mayor-Council form. The question will be put to voters in a special election on December 3, and if passed, the change will be effective July 1, 2014. The election has been called in response to a citizen petition organized by the Chamber of Commerce. The League supported 1) placing the question of changing the form of city government from Council-Manager to Mayor-Council on the November ballot; and 2) including a section on the ballot that if a majority of voters are in favor of the change in form of government, the change be implemented on January 1, 2018. Due to events since the last time the Columbia League studied this issue, the decision was made to conduct a new study and consensus session to revisit the question of what form of government we believe would best serve Columbia.

Under both systems, the Council has legislative and policy power, is responsible for passing the city budget, and appoints members of the judicial branch of government. In the existing Council-Manager government, a professional manager is then responsible for overseeing the executive branch of government including hiring and firing personnel, setting salaries, administering the budget, overseeing daily operations and reporting to the Council. In the Mayor-Council form that is now proposed, an elected mayor assumes control of the executive branch, although the mayor may also hire a professional administrator to work under him or her.

We have prepared a brochure that outlines the main points in distinguishing between these forms of government. Also, the Columbia Area League plans a series of three meetings to develop consensus and allow us to speak on the central issue of the election. On October 3 we will meet at 5:30 PM at the USC Law School Auditorium to hear a presentation on the constitutional and legal aspects of these systems

by Scott Slatton of the Municipal Association of South Carolina. On October 17 we will meet at the same time and place for a panel discussion on the pros and cons of the systems. This will be moderated by Rita Paul. Panelists represent diverse points of view. They will be Jon Pierce, retired Associate Director of Governmental Research and Service at USC's Institute for Public Service and Policy Research; Gary Cannon, Executive Director, SC Workers Compensation Commission and government relations professional; Diane Sumpter, President of DESA, Inc.; and James Felder, author and former President of the SC NAACP and former member of the SC House of Representatives.

We will then hold a consensus meeting at 6:00 PM on October 24 at the Cooper Branch of the Richland County Public Library. All are welcome to attend, although only League members can contribute to the formation of actual consensus.

In addition, we will be assisting the Delta Sigma Theta sorority in connection with their panel discussion on the pros and cons of the two forms of city government, to be held on Monday, September 30, at 6 PM at the Bethel AME Church on Woodrow Street. League member and immediate past president Rita Paul will moderate.

League members are strongly encouraged to attend the League events on **October 3** and **17** to learn more about this important issue for our capital city, and to participate in the consensus discussions on **October 24**.

Details are on web site/elections

<http://lwvcolumbiasc.org/elections.html> and
http://lwvcolumbiasc.org/files/Key_Facts_about_Richland_Library_Bond_Referendum.pdf

Attachments

- ◆ **Council-Manager or "Strong Mayor" The Choice is Clear: Learn the Facts About Council-Manager Government;**
- ◆ **LWV Columbia's brochure**

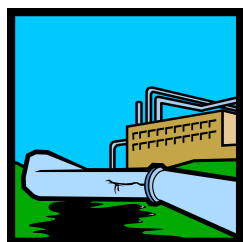
Also, see p. 7 for dates, times, and locations of forums.

ENVIRONMENT... Chester Sansbury

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES – ARE YOU MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

There is no shortage of conservation and environmental issues to bend your thoughts around. Newspaper articles and email messages abound with discussions of •solar energy, •Columbia's horrible wastewater treatment system maintenance, •wetlands protection, •water quality standards, •nuclear waste disposal, •ugliness of our landscape, and •other concerning matters. What does one do?

Whether you focus on local or Statewide issues, the bottom line is, you've got to get active! Unbuckle the TV control or your IPAD from your fingertips and get in the fight or support someone or some group who's in the fight! Otherwise, what difference are you making?



The State Wetlands Task force is winding up its recommendations for action, which really don't matter too much; DHEC is pushing water quality standards for mercury in sediment and dragging their feet on minimum in stream flow to protect fish habitat; power companies are opposing easing of obstacles to •solar power development; Columbia City is struggling with its wastewater treatment system while funneling millions from it to other projects; and visitors to our Midlands comment on the unsightliness of it. **And** along with all this, State budgets are being slashed and legislative environmental champions, regardless of green tie awards, are few and far between.

If you are concerned, willing to get involved or just want to make a difference and **learn more about all this "environmental stuff" and be an advocate for protection**, be advised that **the next SC Conservation "Common Agenda" meeting hosted by the CVSC and partners (including LWVSC) will be October 10th in Columbia.**

Contact Rebecca Haynes at rebecca@cvsc.org for details. Like all of the issues League members care about,...

Doing nothing is not an option.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SEPTEMBER PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON

Our guest speaker was **Derrick Huggins**, USC Transportation Director, Chair of the COMET Visioning Committee and member of the CMT Board. He is responsible for campus transportation.

Mr. Huggins came to his position in a most round-about way. He majored in biology/chemistry, but needed a job while attending college. Since he had experience driving a school bus (when he was sixteen!), he qualified to drive USC's Shuttlecock at \$3.15 per hour. While still a student, he moved up through the ranks in parking and vehicle services and when he entered the Masters Program in Public Health, he was promoted to Business Manager and Director. Later, Mayor Benjamin asked him to help the city during its transition to CMRTA.

Mr. Huggins has a grand view for transportation in Columbia, and hopes to see many of its components implemented by the year 2020. He provided us with a Vision: 2020 handout depicting bus travel corridors extending out to Blythewood, Lower Richland, Spears Creek Church Road, and Irmo, to name a few. Huggins' plans to begin the gradual build-up of ridership by using the students of USC as his core base, transporting them from areas where they are concentrated back to the University complex. He did this with USC, increasing students' use of the university's shuttle system for USC home football games. Five years ago Huggins asked the Highway Patrol to provide a dedicated bus lane to the stadium, but they refused. Instead, Huggins and his staff developed a bus route following special roads within the University. Approximately 400 students initially used the shuttles; today that number has risen to 6-7,000 with a goal of 8,500 riders.

Another part of the vision includes "circulators" in the city's core: all the buses would travel throughout the core, maximizing bus frequency in that area. People could ride the buses within the core free of charge.

The vision includes electric, hybrid and natural gas buses as part of the fleet. There are many issues that still need to be addressed, but Huggins responded to a few questions and comments from the audience, i.e., the **corridors identified on the Vision 2020 handout have NOT been prioritized**. Also, **Sally Huguley** suggested that people donate their Pig Points (grocery reward) toward free transportation. Mr. Huggins liked this suggestion.

Town meetings will be used to help determine bus routes, which means if people want to see changes in their neighborhoods, they need to be involved.

I am originally from New York, and when I came here what I missed most was a good public transportation system. If Mr. Huggins has his way, I won't be missing New York too much.

Pam Craig



League Media Stars!

You, too, can be a media star!

Frank Knapp of radio station WOIC (1230 AM) interviewed *Shirley Geiger* and *Martha Roblee* regarding the 2013 election education forums and other voter services activities the League is holding in the Columbia area.

Announcements & Items of Interest

PROJECT XX SOUTH CAROLINA co-founders, Ginny Deerin and Nikki Hardin, presented to League Leaders Day on August 24th in Columbia. In January of this year, Project XX adopted the *goal of getting more women elected and appointed to office in our state*. Their strategy is to focus on particular boards which would most clearly benefit by broader representation. Their first project focused on the elections in May of new board members for 8 public colleges and universities. Our research (our first-ever study on the gender makeup of SC boards) showed that women are woefully and shamefully underrepresented despite the fact that women make up 51% of the population and that the legislature and governor are bound by law to ensure that public boards reflect the makeup of the citizenry. We were especially interested in the MUSC board, which had zero women on it. At the end of the elections, 5 boards increased female participation (including MUSC!), 2 remained the same and one went backwards. We are already planning a strategy for 2014 to increase women on the USC board. Out of the 16 members elected by the legislature, only one is a woman. This is the beginning of a long battle.

Visit the Project XX [with “XX” denoting the double X chromosome of the female. Ed.] website (www.ProjectXXSC.com) or contact them at info@ProjectXXSC.com.

Submitted by Ginny Deerin & Nikki Hardin

ACA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED... *Margaret DuBose* is seeking assistance for the Eau Claire Cooperative Health Center (“ECCHC”) with ACA enrollment and education. Duties include: minimum commitment of 10–20 hours per month (depending on workload), attending the weekly group meeting at least twice a month (TBD), and attending an initial Orientation Training Meeting (required). Opportunities for both weekday evening and weekend hours; schedule TBD based on volunteer’s schedule and needs.

Check out details at their web site: www.ecchc.org or contact Margaret at mdubose@ecchc.org or 803-786-3859.

ENERGY CORNER... SCE&G RATES WILL INCREASE ABOUT 3% AT THE END OF OCTOBER.

One way to protect your pocketbook is to check out a “Kill-a-Watt” meter from your public library. About four years ago the LWVSC, the State Library System and the State Energy Office collaborated to place these devices in many library systems, including the Lexington and Richland Library Systems. Use these devices to determine how much electricity that old refrigerator, for example, uses each month. You may wish to unplug it or give it away.

AND COREY HUTCHINS does it again –“ A new day for solar in South Carolina, a utility attitude adjustment, subsidies for nuclear investment, tea party solar support, legislative heel dragging...it's all here in this comprehensive overview of solar issues underway in the Palmetto State,” says SCCCL.

More at

<http://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/charleston/how-state-utilities-and-the-legislature-continue-to-thwart-solar-power-proponents/Content?oid=4748503>

[Corey is a staff writer for the Charleston City Paper and was previously an investigative reporter for the *Free Times*. He is the S.C. Press Association’s Journalist of the Year.]

**Ernest F. Hollings
Special Collections Library at USC**

1322 Greene St.
Columbia, South Carolina 29208

Saturday, October 5, 2013

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 6, 2013

1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

The [Hollings Library](#) galleries will be open Saturday & Sunday, October 5-6 and will feature exhibits from [South Carolina Political Collections](#), the [Irvin Department of Rare Books and Special Collections](#), and the [Moving Image Research Collections](#).

Brittain Gallery exhibit from Moving Image Research Collections:

"From Omaha to St. Lo : Bob Blair, Movietone and the Battle of Normandy" - through October 31



Bob Blair

**Featuring gallery talks
by
Greg Wilsbacher
at
10:30, 11:30, & 1:30**

◆ League member Chester Sansbury is Vice Chair of the **SC Environmental Excellence Program Advisory Committee**. His term ends around January 2014. If any of you are willing or interested in serving on the committee (or *another* environmental nonprofit organization), please let him know. Detailed info about it can be found at <http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/admin/cwm/sceep/>

Chester - Csansbury1@sc.rr.com

Details about the following can be found in your September *League Lines* -

◆ **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2013
2013 Conference of South Carolina
Public Education Partners!**

[To register, click here.](#) or, for more info, email: [South Carolina Future Minds@mail.vresp.com](mailto:South_Carolina_Future_Minds@mail.vresp.com)

◆ **MARGINALIZED VOICES:** SC Applesseed Legal Justice Center continues its series on issues of poverty in South Carolina. League members *Allen* and *Gladys Coles* are noted sponsors of this event. [see **September League Lines**]

For additional info about the series, the film-maker, etc., please visit:

<http://voicesfromthemargins.eventbrite.com/>

Monday, October 7: Short films from Latino Teen Flash Festival

Monday, November 11: A Place at the Table: <http://www.takepart.com/place-at-the-table>

◆ **Seagrove: Traditions in Clay
August 22 – October 4, 2013**

Show closing reception and departmental open house Friday, October 4.

USC McMaster Gallery in the USC Art Department
(1615 Senate Street)

For more information, contact, **Mana Hewitt**, Director - McMaster Gallery - USC Art Department
<http://manahewitt.com> hewittm@mailbox.sc.edu

Learn More League!

National: www.lwv.org/
State: <http://lwvsc.org/>
Columbia: www.lwvcolumbiasc.org



Lexington County Council

2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 4:30 PM
 2nd Floor County Administration Building
 212 South Lake Drive Lexington, SC 29072

For confirmation of meeting dates, please call 785-8103 or check website www.lex-co.com



Richland County Council

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM
 2nd Floor County Administration Building
 2020 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29202

For more information, please contact the Clerk of Council Office @ (803) 576-2061 or check: www.richlandonline.com/departments/countycouncil/index.asp or www.rcgov.us



Columbia City Council

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM
 City Hall – 1737 Main Street Columbia, SC 29201

Check website at www.columbiasc.net for more information.



FORMS OF GOVERNMENT FOR COLUMBIA, SC

Public Information Forums Conducted by the League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area

October 3, 2013 5:30 – 7:30 PM USC Law School Auditorium

Forms and Powers of Municipal Government in SC

Speaker: **Scott Slatton**, Legislative & Public Policy Advocate, Municipal Association of South Carolina

October 17, 2013 5:30 – 7:30 PM USC Law School Auditorium Moderator, Rita Paul, LWVCA

Panelist Discussion of Pros and Cons of Forms of Government for Columbia, SC

- **Jon Pierce**, Retired Associate Director of Governmental Research and Service, USC Institute for Public Service and Policy Research
- **Gary Cannon**, Executive Director, SC Workers Compensation Commission
- **Diane Sumpter**, President and CEO, DESA, Inc.
- **James Felder**, author and President, South Voter Education Project

October 24, 2013 6:00 – 7:30 PM Cooper Branch – Richland Library (Trenholm Rd. near Forest Dr.)

League Consensus Meeting on the Forms of Government Issue **

(Discussion is open to the public; participation in consensus limited to League Member)

** Discussion of the issues as League members come to consensus on the issue. Within the League, consensus means agreement among members or "sense of the meeting." It does not denote a simple majority, nor does it require unanimity, yet it reflects what League members in general think on a given subject. Consensus is the goal of League studies and all League action is based on the consensus reached

2013-2014 Board: President – Martha Roblee; 1st VP – Julie Sellers; 2nd VP – Sally Huguley; Secretary – Al Roblee; Treasurer – Marianne McGrath. Directors: Pat Forbis (Women’s Health), Sej Harman (Communications/Membership), Sarah Leverette (State Liaison), Pat Mohr, Lynn Teague (Advocacy). Nominating Committee (2013-2014): Rita Paul, Susan James. Off-Board: Voter Services – Shirley Geiger; Website – Suzanne Rhodes; Environmental Affairs – Chester Sansbury; Membership – Pam Craig/ Marzi Knight (Co-chairs); *League Lines* – Suzanne Rhodes/Sej Harman (Co-Editors).