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Spring 2017

ADVOCACY IS HOT

By Holley Ulbrich, LWVSC Director

Advocacy is the hot word for 2017, as we try to influence both Congress and the General Assembly (as well as our local governments.) It's an important part of our work as a League.

As Lynn Teague notes in the new edition of Advocacy 101, it starts with becoming informed. Listen in on Lynn's monthly phone conferences about what's happening in the General Assembly. Visit the website http://www.scstatehouse. gov/ to follow legislation, find out about hearings and committee meetings. Be wary of alternative facts and fake news; make sure your sources are reliable.

Advocacy takes many forms, but basically it is working both alone and with others to try to persuade elected officials

to support actions you support and vote against actions (including appointments) that you disagree with. Both Patrick Dennis at LEAD and the newly organized group INDIVISIBLE emphasize that legislators at the state and national level want above all to be re-elected.

At the state level, the number of people who vote in primaries, (where the decision is often made) is very low. For a typical legislator, only 2,500 people is a normal turnout in their district. So they care about voters, but almost exclusively voters who are their constituents, so focus your attention on those for whom (or against whom) you can vote. Tell them where you live.

ADVOCACY IS HOT: continued on page 3

Advocacy 101 When Citizens Advocate Democracy LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA Effecting Change Through the Legislative Process



The League's mission is to EDUCATE and ACT. In order to ACT we have to know how to ACT. Let our League's Advocacy 101 handbook help you. You can download it at our website: www.lwvsc.org.

League Members Participate in the Women's March in Washington, DC on January 21st



Highlights:

• Advocacy is Hot 1 & 3	
• Co-Presidents' Message 2	
• What is Dark Money 2	
• LEAD Day 2017 3	
• Canadian Waste @ SRS 4	
• MLK Day 4	
• In Memoriam 4	
• The First "Conversation" 5	
• Convention Registration Form 6	
• Women's Day March 7 & 8	







Co-Presidents' Perspectives:



Julie Hussey Co-President, LWVSC

Almost 100 years ago, the League of Women Voters arose as a "mighty political experiment" designed to help 20 million women use their new power to shape public policy. Lobbying for transparent and accountable government and social reform legislation is in our DNA.

It is no wonder the growing number of citizens concerned about the state of our democracy are turning to League's across the country and in South Carolina.

Democracy needs us. From 2006 to 2016, the US fell from an 8.22 to a 7.98 on Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index 2016, which now ranks us as a "flawed democracy." This index ranks countries on sixty indicators within five categories: *electoral process and*

pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. A score between 8.0 and 10 is considered a "full democracy." A "flawed democracy" has a score of 6 to 7.9. "Hybrid regimes" are ranked between 4 and 5.9, and Authoritarian regimes score less than 4.0.

The drop in the US score correlates with decline in the support of a democratic system of government especially by younger generations. World Values Survey data from 1995-2014 notes that even in the United States, 24% of US millennials reporting in 2011 (at the time they were their late teens or early twenties) considered democracy to be a "bad" or "very bad" political system for the US. Those of us at the LWV Convention in Washington, DC last summer heard similar statistics about millennial disinterest in politics.

We cannot ignore this data nor can we fret about it. We must use it as a reminder of why we exist. We must use it as our overarching call to action.

Questions about voter fraud, ethical behavior, the relationship between church and state, and the balance of power could leave some to throw up their hands in disgust or can be reminders that democracy is only as strong as the commitment of citizens to defend it. Luckily, many people, especially women are rising in defense.

To Make Democracy Work, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina and all of the Leagues across this state must embrace the citizens and noncitizens of all races, religions, political leanings, and ages who recognize the need to stand up



JoAnne Day Co-President, LWVSC

for democratic values of liberty, justice, and equality.

Let us welcome these faces as friends, supporters, and/or members (remember as of Convention 2016, both citizens and noncitizens as well as 16 years and older can be voting League members). Be inspired by their energy and willingness to try new approaches. Look for ways to share our advocacy and voter service experience with educational forums and training. Find ways to work side by side and break out of silos.

A weakened democracy needs a stronger electorate. It needs these new voices, it needs you, and it needs the League of Women Voters.

Julie and JoAnne

TIDBITS OF TRUTH - What Is Dark Money?

The term "dark money" was first used by the Sunlight Foundation during the United States 2010 mid-term election. Dark money is funds given to nonprofit organizations—primarily 501(c)(4) (social welfare) and 501(c)(6) (trade association) groups—that

are not required to disclose their donors. They can accept unlimited donations from corporations, individuals, and unions, and spend funds to influence elections. More than \$300 million in dark money was spent in the 2012 elections. The rise of dark

money is a direct consequence of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United* (2010) that corporations and unions could contribute unlimited amounts of money to those nonprofits on behalf of (or in opposition to) candidates.







ADVOCACY IS HOT:

continued from page 1 -

Get to know your representatives. Invite them to speak at a League meeting. Attend their down-home meetings, including legislative delegation meetings in many parts of the state. Meetings of local government bodies usually have time set aside for public input. Thank them when they do the right thing. If you want to contact them on a particular issue, personal contact is the most effective, either in person or by phone.

Christine Prado, a member of the Clemson League, has been observing Telephone Tuesday since the first of the year, calling our two senators and her Congressman every week on some legislative issue. Legislators are sensitive to numbers so coordinated calling is a good idea.

Find out when they will be at one of their district offices (for Congress: state legislators are usually home on weekends, Friday-Monday, during the legislative session). Next best after a phone call is a letter, a real letter, not a copied one where he/she get a blizzard of identical letters. Identity yourself as a constituent. Be brief. Be factual. Use personal stories. Least effective: emails.

Another way to create numbers while honoring the League's purpose of creating an informed electorate participating in government, is to write letters to the editor of your paper. (Don't identify yourself as a League member unless you are the president or the LTE is on a League issue and will go out under the president's name.) If you have some expertise in a particular area, write an op-ed. It's also a good idea to subscribe to a newspaper because we as concerned citizens depend on an independent media to provide the transparency that is essential to democracy.

Mass marches, sit-ins, demonstrations are all fine and attention getting, and good ways to get to know others who share your concerns. But the real work of advocacy is the day-to-day persistent work of knowing what is happening and providing your input. April 1st used to be the start of the new year (that's why it's April Fools Day), so it's not too late for a New Year's resolution to become an active citizen. It's as easy as 1-2-3.

1. Learn.

Get informed.

2. Get acquainted.

Know your elected officials.

3. Advocate.

Pick up the phone, write a letter, speak out at a public meeting. You'll be glad you did.

Reflection on Lead Day From a First Timer

By Cheryl Lee, LWV Clemson Area Board Member

If you missed LEAD Day 2017, you lost out on a lot of my favorite breakfast foods. Although the "menu" said light, it had almost everything I like for breakfast except Callaway Gardens Stone-Ground Grits.

Additionally, you did not hear Patrick Dennis give us a lively update truly behind the scenes at the statehouse. Lynn Teague was as informative at LEAD Day as she is on her monthly legislative update calls, which I never miss. Amelia Thompson explained her job as state attorney for SC Environmental Law Project and gave us insights into areas we might wish to advocate for. The update from National let us all know that there is work to be done. There was a table by table sharing sessions in which members told their success stories and shared their concerns. If you weren't there, you should have been with the 65 members (and non-members) from around the state who gathered in Columbia on January 28th.

Patrick Dennis, Chief Counsel of the Judiciary Committee for the SC House of Representatives described politicians by saying people don't like them for two reasons: they lie and they talk too much. After that shock, he went on to explain to us how to effectively engage with the General Assembly. He pointed out that less than one in four registered voters bother to vote, so when we CALL our legislator's office and identify ourselves as a constituent, we get their attention. Robo calls and post cards are not nearly as effective as one-on-one phone calls or personal direct contact. He also gave a vivid description of the role of dark, soft and hard money in influencing our state legislators. And he was optimistic about the willingness of our new governor, Henry McMaster, to work with legislators.

Lynn Teague's handouts and the discussion of what is happening in the 2017 General Assembly offered a lot of insight in what to expect. Among other pressing issues, the League opposes efforts to severely limit the automatic stay (S105), which allows affected parties time to fight undesirable changes of many kinds, including land use. Judicial selection reform may also see some action this session, as well as the gas tax.

Amelia Thompson, staff attorney for SC Environmental Law Project, addressed a number of issues that her organization is working on, including the abuses of eminent domain and school bus replacement. This organization is a small non-profit that responds to requests for litigation on environmental issues.

We found our voices as we shared best practices with other leagues as the fruitful day came to a close. In addition to this being an informative LEAGUE EDUCATION and ADVOCACY DAY, the lunch was delicious!

Website: www.lwvsc.org Join the League today!







Canadian Waste is Now Destined for SRS

By Suzanne Rhodes, LWVSC Off Board Specialist, Nuclear Issues

NUCLEAR UPDATE: On February 2nd a US federal court judge ruled that the unprecedented plan to ship 6000 gallons of intensely radioactive liquid 1500 miles from Ontario would go forward. This 4-year plan to send 100-150 trucks containing the most radiotoxic liquids that exists will not be challenged because of the possible precedent-setting decision that could be established on appeal.

This convoy had been put on hold pending the outcome of the legal challenge. A cross-border coalition had urged the court to either suspend the shipments or to require a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement in compliance with US environmental law (NEPA), because such highly radioactive material has never before been transported over public roads in liquid form.

The court supported DOE claims that the transport of this waste in liquid form poses no more dangers than hauling it in solid form.

Tom Clements of SRS Watch has reported that Indonesia demonstrated a method called 'down-blending', carried out with DOE approval, which eradicates any need for shipping liquids. The same technique can be utilized at Ontario.

Down-blending and solidifying the waste in Canada would be cheaper, faster and safer than moving this through dozens

of communities, and then processing and dumping it into aging waste tanks at SRS.

The talented coalition showed that the toxicity of a few ounces of the Chalk River liquid could ruin an entire city's water supply. However, the judge basically said that the issue is too complicated and too technical to be determined on the basis of information presented in the suit. A severe sideways impact of the transport cask, or a prolonged diesel fire causing boiling of the liquid and over-pressure rupture of the containers, could spill the liquid contents into the environment. The Judge disallowed the two expert declarations.

Martin Luther King Day March



LWV Hilton Head/Bluffton members march in the MLK Day March.

In Memoriam

Sheila Catherine Gallagher

SHEILA GALLAGHER of Columbia and Florence was a long time member of the League and an active member of the state League board as director for education. Sheila was dedicated to quality public education in South Carolina and was a teacher for 34 years in Florence District One. She was very involved with the South Carolina Education Association and held various offices including President for several years. Sheila also stepped forward and entered politics and ran unsuccessfully for the South Carolina House of Representatives in 2010 and Superintendent of Education in 2014. Sheila leaves a legacy of strength and inspiration with her dedicated and passionate support of public education in South Carolina. See more at: http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestate/ obituary.aspx?n=sheila-gallagher&pid=183710327&fhid= 3934#sthash.uBXY6CRK.dpuf.







Call to 2017 State Convention

DEMOCRACY--PASS IT ON!

Join Us! April 29 and 30 at The Inn (at USC) in Columbia

Your state board has lined up some great speakers and workshops for the annual state convention: Pamela Goodman, President of the Florida League on their successful redistricting court challenge; Anton Gunn from MUSC on health care in South Carolina, Shawna Howell with a workshop on using social media; and national president Wycleia Harris. Long-time and recently retired SC Senator Wes Hayes will be receiving the Spirit of Democracy Award. We will also be electing new state board members, adopting a budget and a health care consensus, and staying at The Inn on the USC campus, which is a lovely place. Room rates are about \$125, including full breakfast both days-more details on that later. So mark your calendar for April 29th and 30th for two days of Carolina League, caucusing, voting, listening, learning, celebrating, and enjoying some good food and fellowship with other Leaguers from around the state. Registration deadline is April 10th, but don't wait—commit!

COMPLETE THE ATTACHED REGISTRATION FORM. Registration fee of \$90 can be paid in advance with your registration or at the door on April 28th and covers lunch, reception and dinner on Saturday as well as materials and send it to LWVSC c/o Jeanette Roveri, 38 Pinewood Rd., Sumter, SC 29150, or email your registration to copresidentlwvsc@gmail.com.

2017 STATE CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Fee: \$90 per attendee (includes lunch, reception, and dinner on Saturday and materials)

NAME	
LEAGUE	
PHONE	EMAIL:

Reserve by Monday, April 10, 2017 to: LWVSC, c/o Jeanette Roveri, 38 Pinewood Rd., Sumter, SC 29150 Or email your registration to copresidentLWVSC@gmail.com. Payment may be made in advance or at the door. Checks should be made out to "LWVSC".

Contact Julie Hussey with any questions: 843-224-1096 or copresidentLWVSC@gmail.com



The First "Conversation"

By Joan Kinne-Shulman, LWV Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area

On Wednesday, January 11, at 2:00 PM at the Campbell Chapel A.M.E. Church in Bluffton, the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area held a program entitled "Creating a Beloved Community: A Conversation on Race Relations." It is the first of what we hope will be an ongoing series. The initial program focused on relations with African Americans in the area.

As people streamed into the church, we ran out of handouts. The total numbered more than 200. We were pleased and awed by the positive reception.

After Dr. Jon Black, the head pastor of the church, welcomed everyone, Moderator Luana Graves Sellars introduced the panel of five. Sellars, a native of New York, is a relatively recent arrival to the area. She has been a publicist, handled advertising accounts, and set up early learning centers. Locally, she is on the board of the Heritage Library and is a contributing writer for the Hilton Head Monthly and the Bluffton Monthly magazines.

The five panel members were David Ames, Dr. Jon Black, Fran Heyward Bollin, Alexander Brown, Jr., and Dot Law. Ames is a long-term resident of the area, a Hilton Head Island Town

Councilman, and a member of the <u>Bridge Builders</u>. Bollin is a native of Bluffton, a member of the League of Women Voters, an author, and a former editor of The Island Packet. Brown is a fifth generation Native Islander, a businessman, a chair of the HHI Planning Commission, and a <u>Bridge Builder</u>. Law is a League member, a <u>Bridge Builder</u>, and a former commissioner of the Hilton Head PSD.

Brown talked about his family background and expressed disappointment that Hispanics and those who might hold different views about coming together were not included in this first conversation. He also noted that Native Islanders were not entirely happy with the way the HHI town government had developed since its inception in 1983.

Bollin, descended from a slave owning family, chronicled life in the area from before the Civil War to about the midtwentieth century. Blacks and whites knew one another and depended on one another. But blacks worked for whites, not the other way around. Blacks were also subjected to indignities, such as having to use blacks only entrances to public buildings and worse, that did not apply to whites.

Law spoke about the <u>Bridge Builders</u> group. Its purpose is to help diverse groups learn about and understand one another. Currently, the <u>Bridge Builders</u>



Some of the 200 attendees at the LWV Hilton Head/Bluffton League program on January 11, "Creating a Beloved Community: A Conversation on Race Relations".

are trying to help those affected by Hurricane Matthew learn about what help is available. She also indicated that the recent reworking of the HHI Land Management Ordinance (LMO) created mistrust between the town government and the Native Islanders. The latter felt that the revisions tended to favor developers. Law believes that the availability of low-cost housing is an issue that local governments need to address.

Ames talked about the role of the HHI town government in serving all justly. Early policies of the government contributed to the mistrust of the Native Islanders toward the newcomers, as did a lack of awareness and sensitivity on the part of new residents to local concerns. The town is now making it a priority to

correct longstanding issues such as the lack of sewers in parts of the island. Ames stressed that citizens should listen to and truly hear one another.

Black drew on his experience as a marriage counselor to offer guidelines for better communication among groups. Each party should recognize the validity of the other's views. Each should practice "active listening" perhaps by restating what each just heard the other say. Boundaries should be set on "assertive speaking." In order for relationships to be successful, we must love and respect each other.

Sellars then asked panel members to suggest ways to bridge gaps between groups. Their answers included holding gatherings such as the "One Island, One Community" picnic on HHI, spending time with people different from yourself to alleviate distrust, recognizing one another's contributions to society, realizing that public policies need to overcome past grievances.

Sellars also asked the panel, on a scale of one to ten, where we are with race relations in the area. The consensus seemed to be at about five. More work needs to be done to address social and economic divides and to overcome the isolating effects of gated communities,

which create barriers to having conversations among various groups.

Several in the audience made comments. Mayor Bennett of HHI wondered what each of us is doing to be the "light in the darkness" of not knowing each other's needs and concerns. Others urged all to be better than what we may have been taught about the negative qualities of others. Additional concerns the audience brought up were the need for workforce housing, removing barriers to voter registration and early voting, solving the heirs' property issues. The League was urged to hold more meetings such as this one—and do so sooner rather than later. A video of the event can be viewed on the WSAV website.







Two Personal Perspectives on The Women's March in Washington DC



By Sandy Stern and Janet Law, Members, LWV of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton

I returned from an exhilarating experience - my participation in the Women's March in Washington, DC on January 21, 2017. It was a first for me. I suppose, I am now considered an official political activist. The day was historic for me, my fellow South Carolinians, our country and the world.

Two buses full of excited Hilton Head Islanders left at 10 pm on Friday night and headed to our nation's Capital. Once we arrived 10 hours later, we all realized when we saw the throngs of women, men and children heading to the Metro for the ride to the protest area along the mall, that this march was a huge grassroots movement.

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators came from all over the country to have their voices heard. As far as one could see, there were women marching in an orderly fashion. They represented ethnic, religious, cultural, and sexual diversity. Many held posters and signs with messages that focused on a wide array of issues with slogans, such as, 'This is what democracy looks like,' and 'Women's Rights ARE Human Rights.' Thousands wore pink knit hats with ears. The marchers chanted, sang and shouted. And, every so often, a very loud roar erupted from the crowd.

I marched for hours with five friends, taking pictures, getting to know folks from so many far away places, and sharing our reasons for marching in this joyful and peaceful demonstration of women's power. I was pleased to meet fellow League of Women Voters members from Virginia and North Carolina. We never did get to see or hear the inspiring speeches of the morning, but it didn't matter because we all felt we were making a difference. The mood was uplifting; the weather was perfect; and, the marchers felt empowered.

It wasn't until later that evening that we learned from calls to family members and via social media that over one million women participated in rallies in cities all over the country and world in support of our march. We arrived back in Hilton Head at 6 am on Sunday morning. What an extraordinary experience I will never forget it! Sandy Stern

Much has been written and spoken and filmed about this truly grassroots demonstration of what millions are thinking and have had no way to express. Little of the actual march went as planned because it was so big, but that didn't really matter.

To see the massive turnout, starting with the daunting line to buy metro passes and to experience the energy of so many people was, for me, a memory I will have forever. What to do with that memory, in order to keep the promise of that moment and place, is a question to ponder, and I hope all who

marched and all who were inspired can find a way to help correct what we protested. March organizers have posted their ideas for action (10 Actions / 100 Days) at https://www.womensmarch.com/

Thanks to all who worked to organize The Women's March on Washington and to keep us safe. It was an amazing day. So many people gathered to insist that their lives matter, that their rights be protected, that no ground that has been won be lost, that their planet be protected and that world peace be a higher priority than any individual's agenda.

Thanks especially to Sandy Stern, who first informed me and others about the possibility of a demonstration or march. She then went to Ravenel SC to investigate bus transportation, and she kept on going after that. Without her initiative, our delegation would very likely have been smaller.

According to Women's March on Washington - South Carolina, "Over 2,000 of us headed to DC to march for human rights, women's rights and justice. And even more joined sister marches across the state! We were peaceful, joyful, kind and compassionate. We surpassed every estimate and expectation in this country and around the world. We made history together." Janet Law

IMPORTANT LEAGUE DATES

March - Women's History Month

8th Wednesday, *International Women's Day*

11th Saturday, LWVSC Board Meeting, 10AM-3PM, Grecian Garden Restaurant, West Columbia, SC*

13th-19th Sunshine Week, a national initiative to foster dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information.

April Fourth Quarter PMP Statements mailed and payment due.

23rd-29th National Volunteer Week

22nd Earth Day

29th-30th Saturday-Sunday, LWVSC Convention, Columbia, SC

May

Thursday, 122nd Session of the South Carolina General Assembly adjourns, Statehouse, Columbia

June

10th Saturday, LWVSC Board Meeting, 10AM-3PM, Grecian Garden Restaurant, West Columbia, SC*

15th Thursday, Summer SC Voter deadline

22nd-25th Thursday-Sunday, LWVUS Council - Washington, DC July

22nd-23rd Saturday-Sunday, LWVSC Board Retreat at Table Rock State Park

Miscellaneous: LWVSC SC VOTER mailed to members 3 times per year • LWVUS Leaders Update distributed electronically every week

* All members of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina are welcome to attend LWVSC board meetings.



LWV SC Voter

Post Office Box 8453 Columbia, SC 29202

The SC Voter

Spring 2017 Volume 66 Issue 3

Established in 1951, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. All members receive the National Voter, the SC Voter, and a newsletter from their local League.

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LWVSC Co-President Julie Hussey and her family from L to R: Walker, Julie, Bill and William Hussey at Charleston's Women's March, January 21st.





Many South Carolina League members participated in women's marches in Charleston, Columbia, Greenville and Clemson on January 21st as well as the main march in Washington, DC.







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