

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 18
Clemson SC 29631

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
P.O. BOX 802
CLEMSON SC 29633-0802
Return Service Requested



Volume 37, Number 8
September 2009

LWVCA President: Della Baker
The Voter Editor: Catherine Mobley

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tues., Sept. 15	LWVCA General Membership Meeting, School District Governance, 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., Sept. 24	LWVCA Board Meeting, Clemson City Council Chambers, 5:00 p.m.
Wed., Sept. 30	LWVCA Hot Topics Lunch: Growth Management in Pickens County. 12:00 Noon, Western Sizzlin' in Clemson (on Rte 123, across from Wachovia Bank) See page 3 for more details about this special event.

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,

Members of the LWVCA met with LWVSC State President, Barbara Zia, in Greenville recently to get acquainted with other upstate area League leaders, to discuss League issues, and to network. President Zia discussed with us some basic resources that are available for use by League leaders. In addition, she asked us to think about opportunities to sponsor joint programs. Attending from LWVCA were Della Baker, Michelle Chin, Eleanor Hare, Holley Ulbrich, Janie Shipley, Janet Marsh and Dianne Haselton. Representatives from Spartanburg, Greenville, and Aiken counties were also in attendance.

LWVCA was well represented at the recent League Leaders Day that was held in Columbia. Eleven of our members attended and several served as program presenters. A panel of presenters gave helpful information on how to plan and implement candidate forums. LWVCA board member, Donna London was one of the presenters. A second session was facilitated by LWVCA member Robin-Kimbrough Melton on *Women in the Corrections System and their Children: What are the Issues?* Robin serves as a district representative on the LWVSC Board and is LWVCA's state liaison. The panel reported on the problem of female offenders and some of the programs that have been implemented to assist these women.

We all had an opportunity to attend one of seven lunchtime networking sessions. LWVCA members who led sessions were Dianne Haselton on Money Matters; Janie Shipley on Growing Your Membership; Robin Kimbrough-Melton on Criminal /Juvenile Justice; and Holley Ulbrich on the LWVSC School District Study. Eleanor Hare served as a facilitator during the session on *Web-based Communication – Tech Tools for Local Leagues*. Other LWVCA members attending League Leaders Day were Della Baker, Carol Ward, Michelle Chin, Janet Marsh and Bill Hare.

A brief presentation was made and information given about the 2010 Census. The Census will be used for a variety of purposes, including: to help the private sector, as well as, state and federal governments determine where jobs and job programs are needed; to help potential homeowners research property values, median income, and other demographic information about a particular community; for use by corporations for market research to determine locations for commercial enterprises, such as food stores, pharmacies, and other essential services; and for planning Head Start programs, public transportation, road rehabilitation and construction, programs for the elderly, emergency food and shelter, empowerment zones and for Title 1 grants to educational agencies.

The session ended with facilitator, Bob Zia, leading us in an activity to think about the League's impact in the community. He asked if we are investing our efforts in the right issues with the right strategies at the right time.

Continue to enjoy your summer and be prepared to *hit the ground running* as our Fall programs get into gear.

Della A. Baker
LWVCA President

**LWVCA September General Meeting:
How We Run our Schools
Tuesday, September 15**

As League members, we know that the “how” of public policy is just as important as the “what” — the structure and process are just as important as the results. Good structure and good process ensure accountability and responsiveness and opportunities for public input, and that kind of healthy democratic process should lead to better outcomes. Public input is important at the federal level, despite the noisy disruptions now going on in the name of citizen participation at town hall meetings on health care. It’s important at the state level, especially when budgets are tight and difficult decisions are being made about spending priorities. And it’s important at the local level, where the elected officials are closest to the people and spend their time living with the outcomes of their decisions and with the people who are affected by those decisions.

Home rule came late to South Carolina, forced on us by court decisions about one person, one vote that made it impossible to continue controlling local government out of Columbia through each county’s legislative delegations. Cities got a little more home rule. Counties got a lot of home rule. But school districts, which are also local governments run by elected boards, got next to none. Citizens got to choose their form of government for cities and counties—whether there was a county supervisor, administrator, or manager (for cities, just an administrator, manager, or strong or weak mayor), how many council members, and whether they were elected from single-member districts or at-large or some of each. None of these choices were made available for school districts. School districts have limited authority over their budgets and mill rates, the amount of authority depending on the district. Cities can expand by annexation (although not easily) or consolidate with another city (like Batesburg-Leesville and Pacolet-Pacolet Mills) or even disincorporate. Counties can consolidate services with their municipalities. But school district lines cannot be changed at the local

level. Consolidation, splitting districts, or redrawing district lines can only happen at the initiative of the county delegation in most counties. (Anderson County is a bit of an exception.)

At the 2009 state League convention, we adopted a study of school district governance. Each League is asked to report on and assess the concerns of the school districts in their area. For our League, there are seven—one in Oconee, one in Pickens, and five in Anderson. Each one has different issues, but all of them have issues! At the September meeting, we will provide background for the study, describing the situation in our seven districts, and inviting members to interview interested parties about what they think needs to change in the way we manage our school districts. This meeting is about grassroots democracy at the state and local level. Come prepared to learn more and to give us the benefit of your perspective on this issue.

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich

**Learning More About
Health Care Reform**

Health care reform is an issue that is of great interest to all of us. Sometimes it helps to be armed with the facts, especially the numbers. Better yet, it’s good to know what is happening here in South Carolina, too. If you want to know more about the health care crisis that we are trying to address, see the links below.

2005 Health Insurance Coverage Status by Age for South Carolina Counties:

<http://www.sccommunityprofiles.org/census/insurance05.php>

Data Summary of the Uninsured Population in South Carolina and the U.S.:

<http://www.covertheuninsuredsc.org/summary.asp>

A recent article on health care in South Carolina in the Anderson Independent Mail:

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2009/aug/15/anderson-area-experiences-issue-underinsureduninsu/>

~Submitted by Holley Ulbrich and Eleanor Hare

**Start Reading Now for the
Fall Book Discussion!**

This fall will mark our fifth book discussion event. The book is George Lakoff’s *don’t think of an elephant*, which offers some great insights into how to frame an issue so that you will be heard. The discussion will be held over wine and cheese at the home of Holley Ulbrich 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 Observer Corps:
A Report from the Field!**

Editor’s Note: In the May Voter, we encouraged our members to become “observers” at local meetings of city councils, school boards, and county councils. Below, Elaine Epstein provides a brief summary of the Anderson County Council Meeting. If you’re interested in learning more about being a watchdog for local government, contact LWVCA President Della Baker or Program & Action chair Holley Ulbrich. This is a great way for new members to get involved!

July 21, 2009 Old County Courthouse in Anderson:

After the opening procedures and proclamation, one citizen’s comments concerned hiring undocumented worker. Much of the time at this short meeting was devoted to economic reports. Chip Bentley presented an overview of the “Comprehensive Economic Development” report which encouraged cooperation. The second report, on the Advanced Materials Center at Clemson,

was presented by John Ballato. After explaining the Center’s work and focus, Ballato described the areas where Anderson County does and will benefit economically from the work. Then, an ordinance transferring the responsibility of Anderson City elections to the County Election Board was approved. A special workshop on Procurement Ordinances was held for the benefit of all council members on July 24th.

~ Submitted by Elaine Epstein

Hot Topics are Coming!

Some of our members don’t like to go out at night. Some of our members want an occasional meeting that is in their county and about their county. So this year, your program and action team tried to address both of those concerns with a series of hot topics lunch. The hot topic for the year is growth management. The first Hot Topics Lunch will be held on Wednesday, September 30th at noon at Western Sizzlin’ on Highway 123 in Clemson. Our invited guests will be Jim London (member of Pickens County Council) and Rick Cotton (Clemson city administrator). They will share their perspectives on what are the most important achievements, opportunities and challenges to growth management in the county and city, respectively, leaving plenty of time for discussion. We have reserved the small room just where the serving line starts, so you can go through the line, get your food, and join us in the back room, or maybe it should be called the side room. We will also be considering our proposed revised growth management statement at this meeting. The draft statement reads as follows:

“The League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area supports a growth management policy for our three counties and their municipalities that balances the desire for economic growth and employment opportunities with protecting and preserving the quality of life that citizens presently enjoy, and that encourages and supports cooperative efforts among local governments within and among the three counties to promote that goal.”

While anyone is free to attend, this first Hot Topics lunch will focus on Pickens County. The second lunch will be held on November 30th in and for Anderson County, and the third will be in and for Oconee County on March 30th. To help us determine if we have enough space, please RSVP to program@clemsontarea.sc.lwvnet.org indicating that you plan to attend. Last minute attendees are welcome, but we'd like to know how many to expect.

~Submitted by *Holley Ulbrich*

**Thinking Ahead to the October Meeting:
The Smart Electricity Grid
and Why We Need It**

Editor's note: To prepare for the October LWVCA meeting, in the August Voter Lew Fitch and Eleanor Hare recommended we read the first chapter of Sustainable Energy—Without the Hot Air (found at http://www.inference.phy.cam.ac.uk/withouthotair/c1/page_2.shtml). Below, Lew and Eleanor provide us with further information and inspiration about “smart energy.”

We must produce and distribute as much energy as we use. If we are to have sustainable energy, we must either reduce the amount of energy we use or we must be smarter about how we produce energy or both.

Currently, energy companies are required to produce as much energy as is required at peak hours. In other words, energy companies are expected to be able to provide all the air-conditioning we need on the hottest of summer afternoons. Some methods of energy production, such as coal-fired power plants and nuclear plants, produce a constant power supply that cannot be easily adjusted for demand. Other energy sources, such as hydroelectric and gas-generated, are easily turned on and off. Wind and solar power are also variable, but not easily controlled.

We can be smarter about how we produce energy by storing energy that is produced in off-peak hours (such as the middle of the night) for use during peak demand hours. Duke Energy

currently uses pumped storage to help offset peak demand. At night, excess energy is used to pump water to storage facilities, such as Bad Creek, which are used during peak demand to generate additional hydropower.

Since energy companies are required to produce enough power for peak demand, excess energy produced during low demand may be thrown away (or dumped) if there is no way to store this energy. Total energy production can be reduced by making the electricity grid smarter and allowing consumers to buy and sell electricity to the grid. Plug-in electric automobiles can be used to store energy in the same manner as pumped storage. The plug-in automobile can buy electricity from the grid at a low price during a period of low demand and sell it back at a higher price during a period of high demand. Other uses, such as clothes washing, can be timed to buy electricity when the price is low. Smart use requires changes in the electricity grid so that it can sell electricity, buy electricity and price electricity according to demand.

~ Submitted by *Lew Fitch
and Eleanor Hare*

LWVCA is on Facebook! Become a Fan!

Facebook is a social networking website and is free to join. Users create their own profile, invite other Facebook users to be their friends and post information to their Wall to let their friends know what's going on in their lives. They can also join networks, which are based around cities, workplaces, schools and regions and become fans of organizations they're interested in.

You must have a Facebook account to be a LWVCA fan. If you are already a Facebook user, search for “League of Women Voters – Clemson Area.” Once you are on that page, click “become a fan.” Anything posted on LWVCA will be posted to your Home Page.

Why is LWVCA on Facebook? LWVCA on Facebook is a means of increasing our visibility; visibility is one component of a successful organization. Facebook has been ranked as the most used social network by worldwide monthly active users and has over 250 million users, worldwide. *~Submitted by Paula Appling*

***Women in the Corrections System
and Their Children
LWVCA League Leaders Day***



A discussion on “*Women In the Corrections System & Their Children: What are the Issues?*” was presented at the LWV of South Carolina Leaders Day on August 15, 2009. Robin Kimbrough-Melton facilitated this presentation. Other presenters were Stanley Leaks (Deputy Warden, Camille Griffin Graham Correctional Institution), Lorie Hino Boddie (Domestic Violence Coordinator, SC Coalition Against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault) and Emily M. Wright (Assistant Professor, Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice, USC).

Pictured above, left to right: Lorie Hino Boddie, Stanley Leaks, Robin Kimbrough-Melton (LWVCA), Emily M. Wright.

Your LWVCA Dues are Due!

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 for the mathematically challenged). 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, as always.

Also, remember that you can make a **tax-deductible contribution** to **LWV Education Fund**. This donation must come in a **separate** check. The local League can use these funds to pay up to one half of our Per Member Payment or we can fund other qualifying educational projects. Mail these checks to the same address noted above and the treasurer will forward them to the Clemson Area League account at the national office. Also, please notify us of any change of address, phone or email, too.

Thanks for your prompt attention to this matter.

~Submitted by Alice Flower

The State's Children: Off to a Good Start?

“In short, getting off to a good start in life is a strategy for increasing the odds of greater adult competency.”

(From *Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Development*. 2000.
National Research Council, Institute of Medicine)

If League members were to reflect on the various issues in which the League engages, we would realize that most, if not all, issues would be less problematic if more of our children got “off to a good start.”

The topics of two excellent and informative panels at the August 15 League Leaders Day in Columbia underscore this point. Socioeconomic data on women in the corrections system and their children reveal that a substantial percentage of the women did not “get off to a good start.” Nor are many of their children.

The second panel focused on one of the League's primary interests .. well-informed citizens who actively participate in our political process. While a good start leading to greater adult competency doesn't ensure well-informed citizens, there is a strong association. “Off to a good start” would lighten the League's work.

One picture is worth a thousand words. The “picture” below presents data from 2008 SC Kids Count report. While SC compares poorly with other states, the tri-county area fares better than many areas of SC. Overall, SC ranks 45th among states – only five other state's children fare worse than ours. For much more information, visit <http://www.sckidscount.org/>.

Child Well-Being Indicator	State		Anderson		Oconee		Pickens	
	%	rank*	%	rank**	%	rank	%	rank
Poverty rate, children under 18***	44%	38	39%	8	40%	9	35%	5
PACT: 8th graders below basic on math	30%	NA	17%	2	16%	1	27%	11
Under age 18 in single parent home	38%	46	28%	10	25%	3	21%	1
Births to mothers not finishing high school	24%	NA	23%	13	29%	30	25%	17
Non-graduation rates, 8th-12th grade	25%	NA	22%	8	8%	5	31%	21

* rank among all states

**rank among 46 SC counties

***200% poverty level

~Submitted by Janet Marsh

A Special Event for League Members in the Upstate

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

LWVCA Members at a Working Breakfast!



On Saturday July 25, Barbara Zia met with League members from Clemson, Spartanburg, and Greenville for a working breakfast at Marybeth's Restaurant in Greenville. Pictured on the left and counterclockwise around the table: Michelle Chin, Dianne Haselton, Janet Marsh, Holley Ulbrich, Mary Deku (Spartanburg President), Kathryn Harrison (Spartanburg VP Program), Janie Shipley, Barbara Zia, Eleanor Hare, Audrie Earl (Greenville Treasurer), Della Baker.



The LWVCA was well-represented at the League Leaders' Day on August 15. Pictured in the photo are the following individuals who enjoyed themselves at the meeting:

Front row: Bob Zia (speaker), Donna London, Eleanor Hare, Barbara Zia (LWVSC President), Della Baker, Janie Shipley
Back row: Janet Marsh, Bill Hare, Robin Kimbrough-Melton, Michelle Chin, Carol Ward. Also in attendance, but not pictured: Holley Ulbrich, Dianne Haselton.