



THE VOTER

SEPTEMBER 2012 Vol. 39, No 6

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area

President's Message



How often have you heard it: If you want to have any impact with your legislator, you must develop a relationship with him (and I wish I could say "or her"). While this is particularly difficult for those of us that are more reserved, it is useful, it is true, and it is imperative . . . and not just in dealing with your legislators. Making casual connections makes room for non-verbal communication and tacit understanding. Too, I think, it's how things get done, it's how progress is made, and maybe it's a seed of peace.

This year's activities will include the usual complement of programs, candidates' forums, voter registration drives, fundraising *and* time for bonding. Jeff Allen will be speaking on the drought and water policy on September 11, Action Tuesday will resume on September 18, and we will be partnering with Clemson University's Civics and Service House on National Voter Registration Day - September 25.

Already this year (2012-2013) we have registered 145 new voters and given countless others information on absentee voting and how to register if they are from out-of-state. Several more voter registration drives are on the calendar – let me know if you want to participate!

So many people have been working so hard already this year: Lib and Rett and the Membership Team are working diligently to expand our numbers, and Paulette, Elaine, Sandra, Patilee, Carol, Lib, Aleta registered voters. Thank you one and all! And to Reggie and Eleanor – thank you for your constant and unwavering support of the League.

Yours in League,

Paula Appling

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message	1
Calendar of Events	2
September General Meeting	2
Action Tuesday	2
League Leader's Day – Sept 15	3
Membership Renewal	3
LWVSC Judiciary Project Rap-up	4
In-Person Voting ID Requirements	5
News Literacy – Critical Thinking	5
Judging Your Candidates	5
Total Immersion into Nat'l Convention	6
LIKE us on Facebook	6
Yahoo! Group: LWVSC Conversations	6
LWVCA Kicks off the Year	7
Voter Registration at CU Vol Fair	7
Observer Corps: Eyes & Ears of LWV	7
Contribution Form	8

THE VOTER

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

- Paula Appling, President
- Sandra Gray, President Elect
- Holley Ulbrich, VP/Program Co-chair
- Elaine Laiewski, Secretary
- Bill Hare, Treasurer/Finance Co-chair
- DIRECTORS:**
- Barbara Hamberg, Program Co-Chair
- Diana Stafford
- Matt Laiewski
- Eleanor Hare, Webmaster
- Pattilee Tate, Finance/Fundraising Chair
- Lib Crockett, Membership Co-chair
- Loretta Park, Membership Co-chair
- Reggie Turetzky, PR/Comm/Voter Service
- Linda Gahan, PR Co-chair/Voter Editor
- OFF BOARD:**
- Bill Hare, Voter Service Pickens Co.
- Elaine Epstein, Voter Service Anderson Co
- Della Baker, History and Archives
- Janie Shipley, Nominating Committee

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Friday August 24 **NEW MEMBER WELCOME AND FALL KICKOFF**, Osher Life-Long Learning Institute, 6:00 pm
- Tuesday, Sept. 4 **LWVCA BOARD MEETNG**, Clemson City Hall Community Room, 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, Sept. 11 **LWVCA GENERAL MEETING, “WHERE HAS ALL THE WATER GONE?”** Central-Clemson Library, 7:00 pm social, 7:30 pm program
- Saturday, Sept. 15 **LEAGUE LEADERS DAY**, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1715 Bull St., Columbia. 9:00 am – 3:30 pm.
- Tuesday, Sept 18 **ACTION TUESDAY**, OLLI Building, noon
- Tuesday, Sept. 25 **NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY**

September General Meeting: “Where Has All the Water Gone?”

Our program for September 11th is very timely. It’s all about water. Jeff Allen, interim director of the Strom Thurmond Institute and director of the Water Resources Institute, will talk to us about the drought and the larger issues of state water policy. And he promised to answer the question of why, if our rainfall for the year is now normal in the upstate (at least this part of it), the lake is still ten feet down. Is someone stealing the water? Jeff assures me that he has an answer to that question, but it is very complex. So please join us at the Clemson-Central Library community room on September 11th (social time at 7, meeting at 7:30) to learn about our water problems and what kinds of policy options we may have to address them.

~Submitted by *Holley Ulbrich*

Action Tuesday-Sept 18

Action Tuesday starts up again on September 18th, brown bag lunch at the OLLI building at Patrick Square, beverages provided. Since we have elections coming up and will be holding candidate forums in October, we will use this time to figure out what questions we want to ask of candidates for state and local offices. It’s also an opportunity to bring an issue to our attention and encourage us to take action. Bring background information so that we can write informed letters or have influential conversations with our legislators. And we will talk about the issue of whether South Carolina should participate in the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act or refuse the federal funds because of concerns about future costs.

~Submitted by *Holley Ulbrich*

LWVSC LEAGUE LEADERS DAY 2012

*LEAGUES IN ACTION – Becoming the Change
We Wish to Create (Ghandi)*

JOIN US! SEPTEMBER 15 IN COLUMBIA

WHO: All League members and member prospects are welcome and urged to attend.

WHEN: Saturday, September 15, 2012 9:00--Gathering and light breakfast, 9:30-3:30—Program

WHERE: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1715 Bull St., downtown Columbia (corner of Bull & Blanding)

REGISTRATION: \$30 per person. Includes materials, light breakfast & lunch. RSVP by September 12 to: LWVSC, c/o Dianne Haselton, 119 Tant St., Clemson, SC 29631 Or e-mail your registration to league@lwvsc.org.

Leaguers from across South Carolina for a fun and educational way to kick off another great League year. Take part in exciting leadership training and education sessions in areas like...

Voter Protection--A National & South Carolina Perspective

A wave of voter suppression legislation has swept the country over the past two years. South Carolina has been at the forefront of this battle but there are many other similar battles playing out in states across the country – in courtrooms, at the ballot and in the legislatures. Tim O'Brien, Project Manager for the Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project at the League of Women Voters of the U.S. will provide a national perspective on the battle over protecting voting rights and what that might expect between now and the November elections and beyond. LWVSC Board Director Paula Egelson will provide a perspective on what's happening in South Carolina.

Take the League Leap to Social Media

League new media guru Shayna Howell will show us how to bring 21st century technology to bear on the League's almost-century-old efforts to Make Democracy Work. Perhaps you've been curious about Facebook or Twitter for awhile. Maybe you've been dragging your feet because it seems like a lot of work or is too confusing or you just don't "get it." You're not alone, and we want to help. Facebook and Twitter and other social media outlets are here to stay for the foreseeable future, and they are impacting political discourse in a major way. The League and our members must seize every opportunity to advocate for our issues, educate the public, and get out the vote. Outlets such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter will allow us to reach more people quickly, easily, and affordably (they're all free!).

Reforming Education Funding in South Carolina

- ✓ *Opportunities for high quality public school education for all our children—rich and poor; urban, suburban and rural; from the Lowcountry to the Upstate*
- ✓ *A system of world-class public education that will give South Carolina a competitive edge in attracting and keeping good paying, skilled jobs*

These are goals the League has long fought for in our state. In the coming year, prospects for making meaningful changes to the way public education is financed look strong. Bipartisan legislative leaders are working on legislation intended to ensure that all schools are funded equitably. Debbie Elmore, with SC School Board Association, will describe her organization's work on legislation to that end. Holley Ulbrich will offer comments and insights.

Action Matters: The Power of One and Two and Three and...

Elaine Faithful will focus on strategies that work: Effective ways of conducting advocacy both at the organizational and individual level, using examples from her own work. Lynn Teague will focus on what we expect to be central issues in the new session of the General Assembly and how these issues impact League positions; emphasis on early action to identify issues and develop sound data-based talking points.

Contact Paula Appling if you are interested in going to League Leaders Day. It is an event that will energize you, inform you and make you a better leader.

Membership Renewal

Members should pay dues for the 2012-13 year as soon as possible. Members not paid by January 31, 2013, are removed from the LWVUS roster. Dues are \$60 per person, \$30 for a second member in the same household, and \$30 for a student member. Make checks payable to LWVCA, with "membership" in the memo line. Mail to Bill Hare, LWVCA Treasurer; PO Box 802; Clemson, SC 29633.

Dues status can be checked with our treasurer at wrhare@earthlink.net.

Tax-deductible contributions can be made to "LWV Ed Fund." Write "Clemson Area" in the memo line to ensure that our League receives credit. (A contribution to the Ed Fund needs to be a check separate from the membership check because we are required to mail the Ed Fund check to National without cashing it.)

We may pay one-half of dues to LWVUS and one-fourth to LWVSC from Ed Fund deposits credited to LWVCA. Any funds beyond these amounts can be used to pay for expenses incurred in educational activities: candidate forums, part of the cost of publishing the Voter, etc. And, of course, your Ed Fund contribution is tax-deductible to you, whereas a contribution to LWVCA is not.

~Submitted by Bill Hare

QUEST FOR MORE DIVERSE JUDICIARY PROJECT WRAP-UP

On Tuesday, August 7, the League of Women Voters of SC celebrated the conclusion of a two-year project focused on the independence and diversity of our state judicial system with a reception and panel discussion at the University of South Carolina Law School auditorium in Columbia.

Elizabeth MacNamara, President of the LWV of the United States, and Barbara Zia, Co-President of the LWV of South Carolina, introduced the program.

Panelists included Senator Larry A. Martin, Judiciary Committee Chair and Judicial Merit Selection Commission Vice Chair; Rep. Leon Howard, SC House of Representatives; Judge Carolyn C. Matthews, President, S.C. Women Lawyers Association; Dean Robert M. Wilcox, University of South Carolina School of Law; Alice Paylor, President-Elect, South Carolina Bar; and John Simpkins, Assistant Professor and Director of Diversity Initiatives, Charleston School of Law. The forum was moderated by Constance Anastopoulo, Associate Professor, Charleston School of Law.

In South Carolina, the Judicial Merit Selection Commission (JMSC) is responsible for publishing upcoming judicial vacancies, publishing the list of candidates who have completed applications, requesting input from the SC Bar, arranging interviews, giving a written examination to the candidates, investigating the qualifications of the candidates, holding a public hearing and issuing a draft report. The investigation is quite thorough and includes financial and credit checks as well as extensive personal inquiries.

After careful consideration of all the candidates, the JMSC sends the names of three candidates to the General Assembly for election.

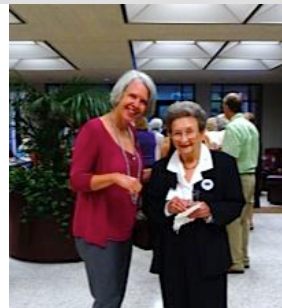
The JMSC was created in 1997 by amendment to the state constitution. It is comprised of 10 members, five chosen by the Speaker of the SC House, three appointed by the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and two by the President Pro Tempore of the SC Senate. An additional requirement is that six members (3 appointed by the House and 3 by the Senate) be current members of the General Assembly and four (two appointed by the House and two by the Senate) be members of the general public.

The consensus of the panel presentation was that the method of selecting judges in South Carolina is quite good and is considerably better than popular election of judges. When judges are elected there can be a perception of bias, resulting from contributions or support during an election campaign.

Although the panelists supported the current system of judicial selection, it is clear that the racial and gender distribution of judges in the court system could be improved. There is also evidence of progress. The 5-member SC Supreme Court has had both an African-American chief justice and a female chief justice and currently has two women and one African-American. Several panelists suggested specific improvements to the process.

LWVSC strongly supports the function of the Judicial Merit Selection Commission as a qualifying commission of candidates for the state's judiciary. In studying merit selection systems throughout the country, a recent report from the Brennan Center at NYU noted that a more diverse nominating commission results in a more diverse judiciary. The League supports increasing the diversity of the members of the JMSC. Expanding the pool of commission members to include judges, lawyers, and laypersons, in addition to legislators, would contribute to enhancing the legitimacy of our system of justice in the eyes of our increasingly diverse citizenry in South Carolina.

~Submitted by Paula Appling, Bill Hare, Eleanor Hare and Janie Shipley



IN-PERSON VOTING ID REQUIREMENTS

In-person voting ID requirements **HAVE NOT CHANGED** as of August 24, 2012. Under current law the ID you present at the precinct should be one of the following:

- SC Voter Registration Card¹,
- SC Driver's License, or
- SC DMV-issued ID card

If the ID requirement changes, we will immediately send email to all League members.

Even if the photo ID law is eventually approved, a photo ID will not be required to vote absentee by mail¹. South Carolina permits absentee voting by mail for any of 17 reasons (including 65 or older, out of the county on Elections Day, etc.)

The League encourages every citizen to register to vote. We will continue to hold voter registration drives until October 6, the last day to register for voting in the November 6 General Election.

The Pickens County Election Commission has been very helpful in providing information to the League and in working with us at Liberty High School to register high school students. You can contact them at their web site or at 864-898-5948. ~Submitted by Eleanor Hare

¹ If you registered to vote by mail or in a voter registration drive **and** are voting for the first time, you will need additional ID at the voting precinct. This ID may be any of: (1) a current valid photo ID (including high school or college ID) that has your correct name and picture, or (2) a current utility bill (electricity/power, cable, satellite, natural gas, internet or telephone bill) that shows your name and address in the county, or (3) a current bank statement that shows your name and address in the county, or (4) a current paycheck or paycheck stub that shows your name and address in the county, or (5) other government document that shows your name and address.

¹ <http://pickenselections.org/absentee-voting/>

NEWS LITERACY – CRITICAL THINKING

As a result of the Youth Voter Registration Project, LWVCA registered many 18 year-old high school students. Now these new voters need to know how to evaluate the news. The News Literacy project and the Center for News Literacy at Stony Brook University and Emory University have a program to instruct teachers on how to get their students to think critically and uncover the truth in NEWS. Check out these websites and YouTube Video:

<http://www.thenewsliteracyproject.org/about/staff/>
<http://www.centerfornewsliteracy.org/>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=endscreen&v=sCD0LKprCoU>

JUDGING YOUR CANDIDATES

Tactics to Watch Out For:

Loaded Statements "I oppose wasteful spending" doesn't say much and implies that the candidate's opponent favors it. If a candidate gets away with claims like that, he or she may never be held to account for identifying which expenses are necessary and which are just fat. The loaded question has the same effect. Asking "Where was my opponent when the chips were down about expanding prescription drug benefits?" without mentioning that the bill never came to the floor for a vote is an easy way to distort the facts.

Guilt by Association Look carefully at criticism of a candidate based on that candidate's supporters--"We all know Smith is backed by big money interests" or "The waste industry has Jones in its pocket." Every candidate needs support from a wide range of people and groups who may not represent the candidate's views on all issues. Judge the candidate's own words and deeds.

Catchwords Beware of empty phrases such as "law and order" and "the American way," that are designed to trigger a knee-jerk, emotional reaction without saying much. If a term defies definition or leaves out great chunks of real life, be on your guard. Try to translate such "buzz-words" into what the candidate is really trying to say.

Baiting Politics is a tough game. But badgering and intimidation are unfair campaign tactics. Think twice about a candidate who tries to make an opponent look weak or out of control by harassing them until he or she flies off the handle or says something rash.

Passing the Blame When one candidate accuses another candidate or party of being the cause of a major problem such as unemployment or inflation, check it out. The incumbent or the party in power is often accused of causing all the woes of the world. Was the candidate really in a position to solve the problem? What other factors were at work? Has there been time to tackle the problem?

Promising the Sky There are promises that no one in an elective office can fulfill and problems that are beyond the reach of political solutions. Public officials can accomplish realistic goals, but voters shouldn't expect miracles and candidates shouldn't promise them. When you hear nothing but "promises, promises," consider how realistic those promises really are.

Evading Real Issues Many candidates work very hard to avoid giving direct answers to direct questions. It's not enough, for instance, for a candidate to say, "I've always been concerned about the high cost of health care," and leave it at that. And the candidate who claims to have a secret, easy plan to solve a tough problem is often just copping out. Watch out for candidates who talk about benefits and never mention costs or how the nuts and bolts of a program will work.

Most Important Factor in Judging a Candidate: On the Big Issues Pinpoint the issues that are important to you. Decide what changes you feel that your community, state and country need most. What do you want to keep the same? Which of your interests are served by the programs each candidate is proposing? As you ponder, weigh alternatives. Listen to people on both sides of an issue. Look at cause and effect. Consider what you have to trade off to get what you want.

from lwvcharleston.org/judgingcandidates.html

TOTAL IMMERSION INTO LWVUS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Total immersion: that is the way many of us learn best and certainly what I experienced this summer at the National Convention for the League of Women Voters held June 8-12 in Washington, DC. This was the 50th biennial national convention for the League, and the theme of the Convention was *Power the Vote*. This was my first time attending any League function outside of our local meetings and what an adventure it was for me! Arriving on Friday afternoon at the Hilton Hotel Conference Center, I soon realized the Convention was really about empowering Leagues from all around the country with the tools to go out and *Power the Vote*. In her opening address Saturday morning, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara challenged delegates: "The League is not an end in itself. We are a training ground for democracy. That is what we have always been and that is what we will always be, working together to learn new ways to spread the word and encourage new generation to learn and engage."

We observed this process of democracy through the Convention itself. Issues important to particular Leagues were discussed through a procedure called the "Caucus", an information session held by a state or local League to gather support for issues later brought to the floor in a Plenary session when all 800+ attendees (~ 650 voting delegates) met together. An important function of Convention is choosing topics or issues for the LWVUS to study for the next two years. This is important to our local League because these chosen topics often go on to be adopted by state and local Leagues for study. The LWVUS Board had already decided on several topics of study to present for consideration, so the caucuses were a way that individual Leagues could lobby for support on a different issue dear to them. The caucuses were held concurrently throughout the weekend and delegates could attend sessions that were of particular interest to them. Some of the Caucuses I attended included *What We Should Know About the 2012 Farm Bill* (LWV Glenview, IL), *Democracy in the Balance: Money, Speech and Power* (LWV Concord-Carlisle, MA), *Water, Water...Everywhere?* (LWV Lake Michigan), and *Our Food, Our Future* (LWV PA). The caucuses provided pertinent facts about topics that would be considered and voted on during the Monday Plenary session. During this session, the Convention voted on and accepted all current LWVUS positions on Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy. New areas of study recommended by the LWVUS Board and adopted included Sentencing Policy where alternatives to imprisonment be explored and a comprehensive program to educate members and communities of campaign finance issues. Based on support generated from the caucuses, the Convention also voted on and passed resolutions (1) to study and update the LWVUS agriculture position, previously approved in 1988 and (2) to advocate for measures including a possible constitutional amendment to allow "set regulations" on campaign contributions and expenditures.

Various workshops held by LWVUS were also helpful and offered training to delegates for programs such as *Vote 411, Using Social Media, Helpful Hints for League Presidents, Power Tools You Can Use to Power the Vote* and other topics.

The Convention was not all work. We were entertained and educated during the Convention by several national personalities including addresses by DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton; Annenberg Public Policy Center's Kathleen Hall Jamieson; U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder; Trevor Potter, president, Campaign Legal Center; Former Representative Mickey Edwards (R-OK); political reporter Eleanor Clift; and pollster John Zogby. The diligent work by the LWV to help preserve the democratic process in our country was acknowledges by these well-known personalities in each of their presentations.

I was pleased to represent the Clemson Area LWV at Convention 2012 and feel empowered to do the work of the League. The League is a vibrant organization of volunteer men and women in all 50 states and DC, and I feel so fortunate to have had this opportunity to learn and network with them.

~Submitted by Sandra Gray

LIKE us on Facebook

Get links to news articles on League issues, learn about upcoming events and get election results. When you **LIKE** us on Facebook, information that we post will appear in your News Feed.

How do you find us to **LIKE** us? From your Facebook, search for "League of Women Voters Clemson Area." When it appears, click it to go to that Facebook. Then find the **LIKE** button and click it. It's that simple!

If you don't have a Facebook, it's simple and easy to join. Go to facebook.com and fill in the boxes under "Sign Up." Once you're a member, not only can you hear from us, but you can keep up with friends and family too. ~Submitted by Paula Appling

Yahoo! Group: LWVSC Conversations

Social media. Social media connects people to others with interesting ideas, current information, invitations and action requests. So many people today get their information on-line. National LWV keeps people across the nation connected. No matter the issue, someone somewhere has dealt with it and is willing to share their thoughts.

A group dedicated to South Carolina League members is available for all LWVSC membership --- it's not just for leaders! Yahoo! Groups is a free service that allows people with a common interest to stay informed. Join LWVSC_Conversations and join the conversation! Email paulaappling@earthlink.net and request an invitation. ~Submitted by Paula Appling

LWVCA KICKS OFF NEW YEAR!

The League of Women Voters-Clemson Area started the 2012-2013 year with a bang on Friday evening, August 24. Approximately 40 members and their guests gathered at the Cheezem Education Building that houses the Osher Life-Long Learning Institute (OLLI) at Clemson University.

Attendees enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and drinks throughout the evening. The meeting room was decorated in a patriotic theme of red, white and blue throughout. Soft jazz music played as members arrived.

The highlight of the evening was a tribute to long-time LWV-CA member and political activist, Berniece Holt. Her daughter Charlotte recounted several stories of Berniece's involvement in local, state and national politics including an encounter over segregation with the late senator, Strom Thurmond. Charlotte's account of growing up with politically active parents was both funny and serious. Berniece's experiences remind us that although political involvement for women has changed for the better, we must stay active and involved to keep moving forward.

Door prizes of DPOs, LWV luggage tag identifiers, several books on advocacy and the history of the league were awarded. A wine basket was raffled off and won by Carol Ward. The raffle netted \$105.00 for LWV-CA.

Paula Appling, president of LWV-CA concluded the evening with thanks to all and invitation to our guest to join. As a result

of the kick off, LWV-CA will add at least five new members to the chapter. ~Submitted by Lib Crockett



VOTER REGISTRATION AT CLEMSON UNIVERSITY'S VOLUNTEER FAIR



On August 21, LWV CA participated in Clemson University's Volunteer Fair. In the 3 hours we were there, we registered 143 voters and informed countless out-of-state students on how to register. League participants were Carol Ward, Elaine Laiewski, Patilee Tate, Paula Appling, Paulette Keffas-Chassin and Sandra Gray.

Observer Corps: The Eyes and Ears of the League

Do you want to stay informed about what's happening in the school board meetings, or city council meetings or county council meetings? Be the eyes and ears of the League – be an observer! You can make a valuable contribute to the League at the same time by reporting on what you've learned! This is a great way for any member, and especially newer members, to get involved and make a difference! Find more guidance here:

<http://www.lwv.org/content/36-observer-corps>

~Submitted by Paula Appling

OBSERVER CORPS

Clemson City Council	1 st and 3 rd Monday, 7:30 pm.	Anderson County Council	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm
Seneca City Council	2 nd Tuesday, 7:00 pm.	Pickens County School Board	4 th Monday, 7:30 pm.
Pickens County Council	1 st and 3 rd Monday, 7:00 pm.	Oconee County School Board	3 rd Monday, 6:00 pm.
Oconee County Council	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday, 6:00 pm.	Anderson Co. School Board	3 rd 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

[Recipient]

Address Line 1
Address Line 2
Address Line 3
Address Line 4