



# Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

## January Membership Meeting



Mayor Drew Laughlin

It has been our custom for many years to begin each calendar year with a report on the "State of the Town" from Mayor Tom Peeples. This year, Mayor Peeples having retired, we will be pleased to welcome his newly-elected successor, **Mayor Drew Laughlin**, on **Wednesday, January 12, at 10:00 a.m.** in the Community Room at **Hilton Head PSD, 21 Oak Park Drive**. We look forward to hearing his vision for the year ahead and for the future of Hilton Head Island. We urge all members to attend and to bring a friend. Guests are particularly welcome.

Karen Wessel, Vice President and Program Chair

### Inside this issue:

January Membership Meeting	1
Safeguarding Our Drinking Water	1
From the Presidents	2
Membership Initiative	2
Board of Elections Meetings	3
Meeting with Senator Tom Davis	4
League's 2010 Annual Fund Drive Began November 18 <sup>th</sup>	5
Calendar	5
Holiday Party Information	6

## Safeguarding Our Drinking Water

In April 2009, delegates to the League of Women Voters of South Carolina's state convention adopted a two-year study of water issues in South Carolina. Safeguarding the quality of water is one of the issues. Others are water quantity and interstate conflicts affecting quantity and quality.

Richard Cyr, general



manager of the Hilton

Head PSD since 2003, outlined threats to the sources of potable water in the area. In the coastal region, most fresh water comes from underground sources, mainly the Upper and Middle Floridan aquifers. Communities and businesses from Edisto, SC, to Brunswick, GA, pump water from these aquifers through wells. Public utilities in our area also buy Savannah River water through the Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority.

A major concern of area public utilities is the intrusion of salt water into the aquifers. Currently, the intrusion rate is one foot a day—a mile every 15 years. Nothing can be done to stop the intrusion,

which results from more fresh water being taken out than put back in. Even if all wells taking water from the aquifers between Edisto and Brunswick were turned off, it would take at least 300 years for the water in the aquifers to become salt free.

To ensure that the water it supplies is safe to drink, HHPSD continually tests for 100 dangerous contaminants as required by federal (Environmental Protection Agency) and state (Department of Health and Environmental Control) regulations. At least 15 tests check on secondary concerns such as taste and odor issues. Some 500 samples are continuously taken at six

*(Continued on page 3)*



## SEASON'S GREETINGS

Wishing you a joyous Holiday season

## From the Presidents



It's an understatement to say that it's been a busy fall election season. Two voter registrations, and eleven candidates' forums, some with television coverage, added up to a high level of media visibility. As a result of a question we asked about campaign funding at our mayoral runoff forum, a newspaper reporter investigated and a detailed campaign finance report on all the town candidates was published in *The Island Packet*.

You'll soon be hearing more about our participation in the Membership Recruitment Initia-

tive. Given our unique geography, a small island community next to a growing community of not only the town of Bluffton but also other non-incorporated areas, we face challenges of attracting members and planning events and speakers to cover a wider range of interest. Some of our members live off island, and we need to consider their interests and needs. We are beginning to think regionally, which will make our voice stronger.

We have an active board of very capable people, who have been



LWVHHI Co-Presidents  
Ginny Ghiradeli Barbara Swift

very busy. They inspire confidence that the League will grow and continue to make a difference in our community. We thank them for their service.

We hope to see you at our holiday luncheon.



### Happy Thanksgiving

Our League was one of seven local Leagues from South Carolina who were chosen this year to participate in a national LWV initiative to enhance recruitment of new members and to retain more current members. Other SC Leagues participating are Charleston, Clemson, Columbia, Darlington, Georgetown and Greenville. Local League members Fran Holt and Kathy Quirk attended the kick-off training this summer in Columbia. They were impressed, as always, with the energy and "smarts" of League women. The two day training focused on the importance of (1) being intentional: using all our activities and events as possible recruiting tools and (2) being welcoming:

communicating our interest in visitors and sharing our enthusiasm for League as a place where we look at important issues and we get things done. A major emphasis of the national initiative agenda is to increase our visibility in the community.

Our League has certainly had a successful beginning this fall with all the publicity surrounding the mayoral forums and election issues. Our League leaders served as moderators and our name was very much in the news. Another recommendation is to use the personal stories of League members to highlight the way engagement with League enriches our lives. At the national level these

are carried under The Storybank on the LWVUS website. Our own Ellen Forwalk put her story in last month's *Lighthouse* and we plan to include more stories of local members starting in the January issue. If you want to know more about the membership initiative, get in touch with one of the committee members who are developing our local plan: Ginny Ghirardeli, Ellen Forwalk, Fran Holt, Kathy Quirk.

## Beaufort County Board of Elections and Registration Meetings

The Board of Canvassers' convened November 5th and November 18th, 3 and 2 days after elections.

**On November 5th**, 132 Provisional and failsafe Ballot envelopes were examined by the board.

46 Ballots were accepted by the board after supporting facts were established by election staff. This included the ballots of 2 voters that were present at the board meeting to give background facts concerning their provisional ballots.

34 Ballots were rejected by State Election Law due to missing witness signatures on absentee ballot envelopes.

52 Ballots were rejected by board vote; provisionally voted in wrong precinct, not registered, late registration, insufficient

information noted on envelope or incorrect ballot type given to voter by poll workers (such as provisional when a failsafe was warranted)

**On November 18th**, 7 provisional/failsafe ballots were presented to the board.

6 were accepted  
1 rejected due to lack of registration found in records

Each provisional/failsafe ballot voter will receive a letter from the Board of Election explaining the board action with a change of address or new registration form as necessary.

Provisional ballots are cast when a person's voter eligibility is in question. Failsafe ballots are issued when a voters right to vote is not in question, such as

a change of address.

Each group of accepted ballots were then opened anonymously by staff with a board member witnessing. The votes were added to the election total. Final numbers were presented to the board for certification. The election was complete.

The next meeting of the Board of Elections will be held December 8, 2010 @ 10 AM at 15 John Galt Road, Beaufort. The meeting will be televised. Agenda will include a critique and action plan for procedures and incidents of these past two elections.

Sue Feutz  
Election Board Observer  
for LWVHHI



**VISIT OUR WEB  
SITE**

[lwwhhi.org](http://lwwhhi.org)

## Safeguarding Our Drinking Water

*(Continued from page 1)*

key spots to test for contaminants. The local test reports are sent to DHEC. As required by the EPA, customers also receive these reports. In addition, water quality audits are conducted by out-of-town officials. The HHPSD has not had a drinking water violation in four years. All other utilities have to meet the same standards.

To reduce demand on the fresh water supply, utilities are promoting more efficient use of water. New products, such as low-flow shower heads and low-use toilets, have become more common. Use of recycled and re-

claimed water is more widespread. Most golf courses in the area use reclaimed water. The largest amount of potable water goes to irrigating plants and lawns.

South Carolina and Georgia are attempting to come to an agreement about withdrawal of water from the aquifers and the Savannah River. Savannah and a large paper plant near the city are heavy users of fresh water.

To add to the quantity of available potable water HHPSD has built a reverse osmosis plant to process brackish water. The South Island Utility also uses reverse osmosis. Desalinization plants

are much more expensive to build and operate.

Another effort to increase the amount of fresh water available at peak times is through a technique called Aquifer Storage and Recovery. During off-peak usage periods (the winter), surplus treated water is stored in the Middle Floridan Aquifer. Then during the summer period of peak usage, the treated water is pumped out. This technique is being used throughout the coastal areas of the United States.

Joan Kinne-Shulman, Co-Chair of the State Water Issues Study

## Meeting with Senator Tom Davis



Co-Presidents Barbara Swift and Ginny Ghirardelli and I had the pleasure of meeting informally with Senator Tom Davis on November 19. After congratulating Senator Davis on his appointment to Governor-Elect Haley's fiscal crisis task force, we discussed several issues of interest to our League.

Senator Davis was quite optimistic about being able to get legislation passed that would change the current funding formula and give an equitable share of state funding for education to Beaufort County. He is working closely with other areas such as Charleston that share out problem. If necessary, they will withhold support for legislation wanted by other areas to get support for their legislation. One of the main changes to the formula would be to establish a minimum amount of money each school district would receive. Another is to give weight to the number of children for whom English is a second language.

He is also optimistic about keeping the Heritage on Hilton Head Island. He doesn't think any corporations are currently ready to

sponsor it, but he thinks the legislature will do what is needed to save this important event.

The League's judicial study very much interested Senator Davis. If his schedule permits, he'll participate in our February program on this issue. He feels strongly that the current method of selecting judges needs to be changed and that more diversity would result from that change. He does not favor quotas.

The Senator believes Jasper Port could become a reality in four or five years. This would require a regional effort to get the required highways built. It would also require a decision to make the targeted market be goods not shipped by container in contrast to the Savannah and Charleston ports. This market is of real interest to a few large corporations.

When asked about the Tax Realignment Commission (TRAC), which is expected to report on its recommendations soon, Senator Davis said that the recommendations could not be implemented in time to help with this year's budget. He questions having a commission that does not include

members elected by the people. There are no legislators on TRAC. In regard to specific tax issues, the Senator indicated that he would continue to push for eliminating the amazingly large number of exemptions from the state sales tax.

Our final topic was voter photo identification legislation. He supports last year's Senate bill that included a two-year transition period and an early voting provision. He believes the legislation is needed, because fraud may be a greater problem in the future. Even if the League does not agree with him on this issue because of the costs and the likelihood that it would discourage people from voting, we all agreed that there are many issues on which we can work well together. We look forward to hearing more from Senator Davis at the public meetings he plans to hold locally during the legislative session, which starts on January 11 and ends in June, and we hope to see him on February 23, when we participate in Legislative Day in Columbia.

Fran Holt  
State Issues Advocacy  
Chair

## **SEASON'S GREETINGS**

Wishing you a joyous Holiday season

## League's 2010 Annual Fund Drive Began November 18<sup>th</sup>

In a typical year, the Hilton Head League of Women Voters holds public meetings, distributes voting information, registers voters, and publishes the *Guide to Elected Officials*. This 'mid election year' has been a particularly busy year for us. If you had arrived a few minutes late for one of the seven mayoral candidates' forums we recently sponsored, you would have seen a "standing room only" crowd. If you had visited the Hilton Head High School at lunch time on the second week of school, you would have seen students huddled around a table of League Members giving out voter registration information. And, if you had joined the hundreds of people along Pope Avenue on St. Patrick's Day to watch the parade, you would have seen the League proudly marching with the 2010 Census banner and distributing information aplenty to get the word out.

People on Hilton Head depend on the League for non-partisan information about elections, and they look to the League's public meetings for information important to people living on the Island. *Now we need your help.* Please consider participating in our Annual Fund Drive by making a small contribution, payable to the LWVHHI, and mail it to us at PO Box 23862, Hilton Head Island, SC 29925. Because we are a 501c (4) non-profit organization, contributions to it are not tax-deductible. However, contributions to the LWV National Education Fund are. We thank you for your past support. Your donation will ensure that the people of our area will continue to get the information they need before they vote and before they decide on issues important to the community.

Donna Russell, Fund-raising Chair



### DECEMBER Calendar of Events

#### Board Meetings

Thursday, December 2, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

Thursday, January 6, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway .

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

#### Membership Meetings

11:30 AM, Wednesday, December 8  
Harbour Town Yacht Club  
Holiday Luncheon  
See page 6

10 AM, Wednesday, January 12  
**Mayor Drew Laughlin.**  
Hilton Head Public Service District #1  
23 Oak Park Drive.

### Officers and Board 2010—2011

#### OFFICERS

##### Co-Presidents:

Ginny Ghirardelli 363- 6404  
Barbara Swift 342-3383

##### Vice-President, Program Chair:

Karen Wessel 682-3397

Treasurer: Janet Law 671-4280

##### Co-Secretaries:

Anita Holcslaw 686-4085  
Caroline McVitty 681-6124

#### BOARD

Fund-raising: Donna Russell 837-7022

Government Issues/Observer Corps:

Joan Kinne-Shulman 842-9246

Hospitality: Andrea Bhatt 681-7950

Membership: Ellen Forwalk 681-3096

Newsletter: Bob McGarry 342-9254

Public Relations/Publicity:

Dee Ann Dowlen 341-2318

Voters Services:

Eileen Drehwing 681-4627

Mary Francis Stahler 363-2030

**HOLIDAY LUNCHEON**  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2010**  
**\*\*Reservations Due by December 2<sup>nd</sup>\*\***

*The December 8 Holiday Luncheon being held jointly by the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island and the American Association of University Women, Hilton Head Island Branch, will be held at the Harbour Town Yacht Club starting at 11:30 a.m. with socializing and a credit card bar for those who wish to purchase alcoholic beverages. Lunch will be served at Noon.*

*Our speaker is Pauline Jenkins-Miller, whose topic will be "Safe Harbour Staying Home for the Holidays". Ms. Jenkins-Miller is the former Resident Services Director and Home Health and Clinic Administrator of the Cypress, a continuing care retirement community. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers and holds Master's Degrees in Counseling and Counseling Services. Her current focus is matters concerning the present and future state of the aging population in America, specifically Aging-in-Place.*

***Holiday Luncheon Menu***

*New England Clam Chowder  
Cajun Salmon*

**OR**

*Chicken Salad with honey lime glaze, gorgonzola cheese, walnuts, grapes and Ranch dressing*

**OR**

*Brandied Pork with Wild Mushroom Risotto  
Tiramisu with Mango Glaze  
Coffee and Tea, Soft Drinks, Iced Tea  
\$25.00*

*Please make checks payable to LWVHHI and send to:*

*Karen Wessel*

*15 Sam's Point Lane*

*Hilton Head Island, SC 29926*

***Please indicate your choice of entrée on the memo line of your check.***

*Thank you. We hope to see you Wednesday, December 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the Harbour Town Yacht Club.*

*For further information or directions to the club, please call or email Karen at 843-682-3397 or karenw41352@gmail.com*