



# Lighthouse

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

## March Membership Meeting

Bluffton Mayor Sulka to Speak at March 9 Membership Meeting



Bluffton Mayor Lisa Sulka will address the Hilton Head Island/ Bluffton Area League of Women Voters on

**March 9, 2011 at 10 a.m. at the Hampton Hall Community Clubhouse in Bluffton.**

Please join us for this important meeting: our first as the newly named Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area League! Mayor Sulka will address the issues confronting the town of Bluffton and the interface with the greater Bluffton area and Hilton Head Island. She will also present ideas for community involvement in local government.

We are organizing car pools for this off island event. For the South End, contact Ginny Ghirardelli at 363-6404. Eileen Drehwing will help organize the Hilton Head Plantation area. Please contact her at 681-4627. Andrea Bhatt will organize the car pools for Port Royal. You can reach her at 681-7950.

### **Directions to Hampton Hall Community Clubhouse, Bluffton, SC:**

#### **From Hilton Head Island:**

1. Take Hwy278 to Bluffton. Turn left at Burnt Church Road off 278 (by BBT Bank). Drive to Bluffton Parkway (first stop light) and turn right. Stay on Bluffton Parkway for about 4 miles and you will drive right into Hampton Hall, or
2. Take Hwy 278 to Bluffton. Turn left at Buckwalter Parkway off 278 (by Berkeley Hall). Stay on Buckwalter Pkwy for about 2 miles and then turn right into Hampton Hall.

After you pass through the guardhouse, stay on Hampton Hall Blvd until you reach the Community Clubhouse. It's about 1 1/2 miles from the guardhouse. When you reach the circle, the golf clubhouse is on the right and the community clubhouse is on the left with a big parking lot out front.

#### **Directions to Hampton Hall from Bluffton:**

From the intersection of Burnt Church Road and the Bluffton Parkway, drive on the Bluffton Parkway for about 4 miles and you will see the entrance into Hampton Hall.

Or:

From the intersection of Hwy. 278 and the Buckwalter Parkway, (by Berkeley Hall), drive on the Buckwalter Pkwy for about 2 miles, and then turn right into Hampton Hall. Proceed as above.

Directions are posted on our website: [www.lwvhhi.org](http://www.lwvhhi.org). Click on Menu, then Calendar, then on the event for a map and directions.

Karen Wessel, VP and Program Chair  
682-3397 Karenw41352@gmail.com

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## From the Presidents



We are moving right along in the process of growing our League. At the Program Planning meeting, which was after the Board meeting in February, we took a formal vote to expand our League and change our name to:

### **The League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area**

Those attending the meeting reported positive comments from their interactions with other members, in general

The appropriate forms have been sent to the State League. After their approval, the application goes to LWVUS, and the changes are effective on the date of their letter of acceptance to us. Members vote on the

change in name and basis of organization at the annual meeting in May when they vote on the changes in the by-laws.

Our outlook for the future of the League is good. We have experienced growth in membership this year, including several new members from neighborhoods in the Bluffton Area. Visibility for the League has been higher than it has ever been. We commend those who worked on the forums, and the Membership Recruitment Initiative Committee,

**We heard from the Mayor of Hilton Head Island, in January, and now we will hear from the Mayor of the Town of Bluffton at our March meeting..** What happens in and around Bluffton affects the whole region, and therefore is of interest



LWVHHI Co-Presidents  
Ginny Ghiradeli Barbara Swift

to the League and its members. Do come to the March meeting and meet new friends across the bridge.

**We will try to form carpools for going to meetings off-island. If you would like a ride, or if you are willing to drive, please call our carpool coordinators.**

**North Island – Eileen Drehwing – 681-4627**

**Mid Island – Ana Andrea Bhatt -681-7950**

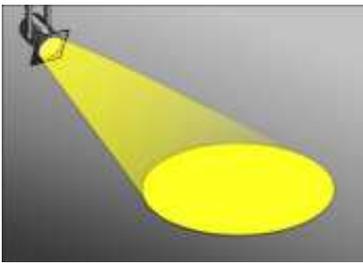
**South Island – Ginny Ghirardelli, 363-6404**

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## **Membership Votes To Change League Name To Include Bluffton Area**

A special General Membership Meeting of the LWVHHI was held February 3, 2011 at the Savannah Bank at approximately 10:30 AM. The purpose of the meeting was to address Program Planning and expansion of our local league. In January, the membership was alerted that the Board would be examining expansion of our league and thereby adopting a name change. The South Carolina league, knowing that the Bluffton league was disbanding, proposed that we might adopt such a change in order to increase our geographic area and expand our talent pool. This proposal was in keeping with a national trend to consolidate and expand existing leagues. As a result, the membership in attendance voted to change the name of our league to the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area (LWVHHI/Bluffton Area). All necessary applications and revision of documents will be set in motion to effect this change. Any change in the bylaws to reflect this change will be voted on at the Annual Meeting of the membership in May.

Submitted by Caroline McVitty, secretary LWVHHI



## Spotlight On

### Barbara Swift



#### League Life

When I was a little girl our household was constantly involved in some sort of community activity. One of those community affairs was the League of Women Voters. It was so

much a part of my life, that it is now impossible to know when I first became aware of the League. I do remember that my mother took a brief leave-of-absence from the League so that she could actively coordinate a campaign for a bond issue to expand the new high school, including a swimming pool. It was a rare event when I got a call at college to say that the second attempt at the bond issue had passed.

My own real involvement with the League came to fruition here on Hilton Head Island. Although I was a member in Connecticut, we were often living abroad, so I was not able to immerse myself in League affairs, however the children knew

what daughter/son power meant when it came to sending out mailings.

In 1994 when we moved to Hilton Head Island on a more-or-less permanent basis, I found women – and men – of similar interests at the League meetings. One of the first meetings I attended was to hear Tom Peebles speak, so it was particularly appropriate when Tom and I decided to present “The State of the Town” speeches each January. Having majored in Political Science, I was delighted to find an active and involved League on the island. Many of the Board positions I have held have been of great interest and have certainly expanded my knowledge of South Carolina as well



**VISIT OUR WEB SITE**

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

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## Talent Among Us

At a recent performance of the Hilton Head Shore Notes, our own Caroline McVitty was a leading lady.

“Reel To Reel Love”, a Valentine theme, presented songs from the movies within a context of two women, “Thelma and Louise”, going to the movies and meeting various friends. The brief encounter with each friend suggested the name of the next song. It was comical and endearing, and Caroline, as Thelma, was a star.

Hilton Head Shore Notes is a popular women’s Barbershop Choral Group.

Ginny Ghirardelli

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## Membership

First, I would like to welcome our most recent new member Gail Kress. Welcome to the League Gail.

Now, even though it is hard to believe, it is time to start the 2011-2012 membership drive. The past year, as all of us know, has been a busy and exciting one for the League. Everyone of us should be proud to call ourselves members. In the next few days everyone will be receiving their renewal statements in the mail. We look forward to all our members renewing their memberships by April 30th. I know there are many organizations looking for new members and I am glad you have chosen to support the League and all the important work it does. If you know of anyone who would like to become a member please feel free to contact me, Ellen Forwalk at 681-3096 and I will be more than happy to send them the information they need to join.



## Minutes Of LWVHHI Special General Meeting Of February 3, 2011

A special General Membership Meeting of the LWVHHI was held February 3, 2011 at the Savannah Bank at approximately 10:30 AM. The purpose of the meeting was to address LWVSC program planning and local program planning as well as to address expansion of our league. The first order of business was to examine and update the LWVHHI's Statements of Public Policy Positions for 2009-2010. The outcome of that process resulted in a new Public Policy Statement which is presented in this issue of *The Lighthouse*.

Also before the membership was a request for concurrence on the Charleston League's proposal to place an item on the agenda for the SCLWV convention concerning its position on illegal drugs. While the membership agreed that the item could be placed on the agenda for the SC convention, there are positions taken in the statement with which the LWVHHI membership might not agree. In addition, there was a request for concurrence concerning the Clemson Growth Management Position, as discussed in 2009 at the

convention in Greenville. There was no discussion concerning this position.

Finally, there was general discussion concerning three consensus questions regarding the LWVSC's Study on School Governance. The essence of the questions concerned (1) the authority to make changes in the composition of school boards; (2) the authority to make changes in school districts by consolidation, splitting or redistricting; and (3) whether or not all school districts should be subject to the same rules on the authority to make such changes or should it be decided in a county by county basis. Regarding the first question, the membership said that the State Board of Education, the legislative delegation and the State Superintendent should be granted such authority. Also there should be a non-binding referendum on the issue. Regarding Question 2, the membership supports the right of the legislative delegation and the General Assembly to make such decisions. The third question was set aside because there were reservations concerning the meaning of the question.

The final order of business concerned a proposal to expand and change the name of the LWVHHI to include the Bluffton area. In January, the membership was alerted that the Board would be examining expansion of our league and thereby adopting a name change. The South Carolina League, knowing that the Bluffton league was disbanding proposed we might adopt such a change in order to increase our geographic area and expand our talent pool. This proposal was in keeping with a national trend to consolidate and expand existing leagues. As a result, the membership in attendance voted to change the name of our league to the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/ Bluffton Area (LWVHHI/ Bluffton Area). All necessary applications and revision of documents will be set in motion to effect this change.

Respectfully submitted,

Caroline McVitty  
Secretary

**LWVHHI STATEMENTS OF  
PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS  
For 2010-2011**

Preservation and protection of wetlands.

The LWVHHI supports beach management projects that

- are for the public good rather than for the benefit of private property;
- are part of a regional beach management plan;
- are designed for the specific features of each locale;
- are carefully and professionally monitored over the long term;
- make use of re-nourishment methods first and employ hard structures only when nourishment alone is ineffective;
- include sand re-nourishment as an integral, ongoing part of any hard structure design;
- give consideration to requiring sponsors of hard-structure projects to demonstrate, in advance, the financial resources to pay for the detection and correction of any negative impacts that the project might have on down-drift beaches;
- require mitigation, redesign, or removal of hard structures that adversely affect nearby beaches;
- establish clear goals and quantitatively designed measures of their success.

Preservation and protection of Outstanding Resource Waters (formerly SAA waters), including opposition to marinas on such waters, and also the quality of other local waterways.

Transportation:

- Accommodation Tax (A-Tax) monies may be an appropriate source of funding for regional public transportation.
- County Council should put a comprehensive transportation plan in place within a reasonable time.

- V. Tax Increment Financing: Support of the concept of tax increment financing (TIF) for use on Hilton Head Island as one way to finance public projects on the island, although it is not a solution to all governmental financing problems and should be used judiciously. The League believes that any future TIF programs for Hilton Head Island should pass the tests of: (a) being fiscally responsible, (b) providing funding only for needed public projects, and (c) complying with state law.

**Issues or positions to monitor and study and act upon as needed:**

- Election process in Beaufort County: monitor redistricting and HAVA implementation
- Beachfront and waterway management
- Education in Beaufort County, including post-secondary and early childhood education through grade 12 levels, and the school budget process
- Hilton Head Island Comprehensive Plan
- V. Ward 1 Master Land Use Plan
- VI. Beaufort County Regional Plans, including multi-jurisdictional regional plans, and implementation of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan Transportation
- VII. Hilton Head Island Airport Master Plan
- VIII. Public Safety
- IX. Home Rule
- X. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) proposals
- XI. Water and sewer service

## Officials from Beaufort County Department of Juvenile Justice and the Beaufort County School District Meet with LWVHHI

Zelphine Smalls, Chief Intake Officer for the Beaufort County Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and Melissa Lather, Beaufort County School District (BCSD) Social Worker met with our League members and guests on February 9<sup>th</sup> at the PSD#1 Building. Lakisha Bryan, Administrative Specialist at DJJ, joined the speakers. Ms. Smalls walked us through the DJJ referral, evaluation, and resolution process, including criteria for prosecution, probation, commitment, release and parole of juvenile offenders. She

also described programs, such as the TASC Plus job training program which is being piloted in Laurens and Walterboro and other outreach programs to prevent juvenile violations. League members ex-



pressed great interest in state regulations which allow 17 year olds to leave school without parental permission, as per the SC Compulsory School Attendance Law. Ms. Lather,

BCSD, explained the details of the attendance law and the methods and procedures to address truancy and dropout rates. Truants are referred to an intervention team which, by state law, must develop an intervention plan to remediate the truancy. Both of our guests have huge case loads. Additional staff is needed but doubtful in the current fiscal situation. Our next membership meeting is March 9 at 10 a.m. at the Hampton Hall Club in Bluffton.

Mayor Lisa Sulka will present. Additional information on this meeting is on page 1 .

Karen Wessel, VP and Program Chair

### Voting Machines

A recent independent audit of voting machines in Richland County revealed a significant number of votes missing from the certified totals. Missing votes were found in more than nine precincts. Data was analyzed after a Freedom of Information request was obtained by a citizen group working with the LWVSC.

Reports like these add to the growing concern about our election system, which uses the iVotronic Touch Screen made by

Electronic Systems & Software (ES&S). LWVSC Board members have met with the State Election Commission and have learned that the machines we use "are nearing the end of their useful life", as reported by Marcie Andino, Executive Director of SEC. ES&S isn't making the iVotronics any more. Some of South Carolina's supply of the machines are wearing out and therefore can't be replaced. If counties want to continue using them, used ones can be bought from

states that have discontinued their use. This is a frightening prospect

We have written letters to the members of our Beaufort County Board of Elections stating our position on voting systems: We support ONLY those systems that are secure, accurate, reliable, and accessible and have the ability to perform a meaningful recount. The iVotronic doesn't meet our standard.

Ginny Ghirardelli

## Legislative Advocacy Day 2011

Legislative Advocacy Day is an annual event which gives League members the opportunity to lobby our Legislators in Columbia on issues important to us. For the last few years, we have shared the day with members of the American Association of University Women of SC and the SC School Improvement Council. This year, we increased our numbers and our clout by combining also with the SC Conference of United Methodist Women. 400 men and women gathered at the Epworth Children's



League's "Three Big Ideas" to our Senator, Tom Davis, and discussed them with our Representatives, Andy Patrick and Bill Herbkersman. Our "Three Big Ideas" are (1) Comprehensive Tax Reform, (2) Investing in Needy Families and (3) Overhauling the Funding System for Public Education. These issues are the same ones we emphasized at last year's Legislative Advocacy Day. We, again, have a sympathetic ear from our Legislators.



Home to hear speakers on various aspects of the theme, "Coming Together for South Carolina's Future: Our Children."

The morning was divided between workshops for some and visits to the Statehouse for others. Our group, Ginny Ghirardelli, Fran Holt, and Sally McGarry, went to the Statehouse, where we gave packets on the

Maybe this year, more progress will be made. We were urged to follow the Legislature's actions and to respond to Calls to Action from our State League when important votes are to be taken. For good information on tax reform in South Carolina, go to [www.roarsc.com](http://www.roarsc.com) or ROAR (Reduce Our Awful [Tax] Rates).

Sally McGarry

## Nonpartisanship And Advocacy

Dear League Leaders,

As Congress convenes and LWVUS ratchets up its advocacy efforts on the hill, I thought we all might learn from a recent article about NONPARTISANSHIP and ADVOCACY as written by Susan Gilbert and published in the LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties, Michigan newsletter.

Discussion encouraged inasmuch as both members and the public sometimes confuse supporting a political party or candidate (partisan) and taking a position on an issue. Thank you to Susan.

Dianne Wheatley Giliotti  
LWVUS Director

The League and Nonpartisanship

by Susan Gilbert,  
Newsletter Editor and 40-year League member

It is not uncommon for outsiders, and even some members, to question how the League can be nonpartisan yet advocate on positions that, in the slice of time that is now, appear to be partisan. In the highly partisan climate that has developed in recent years, the League is one of the very few political organizations that is not in either the liberal/Democratic camp or the conservative/Republican camp. And we have members of all political persuasions and encourage them to get involved in politics. So members may be partisan but the organization is not. All this is hard for

many to wrap their minds around.

The League is nonpartisan in that we do not endorse or support any political party or candidate for office. We don't rate legislators, we don't track their votes and we don't threaten them if they don't vote our way. Voter service is one of our main missions and we publish nonpartisan voter guides and hold candidate forums to help voters educate themselves beyond TV ads. Education is an important League function, and we try in our meetings and in this newsletter to inform our attendees/readers and stimulate them to think about issues in our world.

However, the League is also an advocacy group, and we have positions on issues that have been developed over the years since our founding in 1920 and are the result of study and consensus of the local Leagues nationwide. These positions are updated from time to time, but are basically consistent. The positions and platforms of the political parties, on the other hand, do change and at times they resemble our League position, or not. But the League doesn't change or drop its positions because they are currently those of one party or the other. And we do speak out!

An example is health care. The League has a position on comprehensive health care for all Americans. President Truman liked that idea too and President Eisenhower

delivered a special message to Congress on January 31, 1955 recommending a comprehensive health program for Americans.

(Read it here <[http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=gckx8zdab&et=1104034084596&s=108&mp;e=001KDwHrcyMHN\\_gWackupQkeFb48DiZNIIdH9OUpT Tda0ffw9CRUGXSvFceqTv EZWwNTOH\\_0IYiLqH\\_qfJ QgM\\_Nb5k\\_an41cyMW26X v4kIR05rLDm9uZZkMhy8O 9kJ\\_C1Kf\\_oAR2bktNhrUww RvStkxa1zo7V Vm46zyp](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?llr=gckx8zdab&et=1104034084596&s=108&mp;e=001KDwHrcyMHN_gWackupQkeFb48DiZNIIdH9OUpT Tda0ffw9CRUGXSvFceqTv EZWwNTOH_0IYiLqH_qfJ QgM_Nb5k_an41cyMW26X v4kIR05rLDm9uZZkMhy8O 9kJ_C1Kf_oAR2bktNhrUww RvStkxa1zo7V Vm46zyp)>)

Lyndon Johnson got Medicare passed and that took the pressure off for awhile. But President Nixon encouraged HMOs as a way to rein in costs and provide health care for more people. Then President Reagan came along and decided the free market was the best way to manage health care and the Republicans have basically supported this idea since. But clearly both parties have been on both sides of the issue.

**The key is not to confuse politics with position advocacy.**



# Welcome Spring Party

Join League Friends to Welcome Spring  
Cocktail Party

Sunday, March 20, 2011 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

at Bob and Sally McGarry's

6 Anglers Pond Court Hilton Head Plantation

Please bring hors d'oeuvres for six.

Bob and Sally will provide wine and soft drinks,  
HIGH-WIRE AERIALISTS, LADIES RIDING BAREBACK,  
CLOWNS,  
a diving pool and clouds of balloons.



MARCH  
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2010—2011

### Board Meetings

Thursday, March 3, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

Thursday, April 7, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway .

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

### Membership Meetings

10 AM, Wednesday, March 9

Bluffton Mayor Lisa Sulka will address the Hilton  
Head Island/Bluffton Area League of Women Voters  
at the Hampton Hall Community Clubhouse in Bluff-  
ton.

### 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