

Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/ BLUFFTON AREA



General Membership Meeting 9:30 AM, Wednesday, February 13, 2013 Hilton Head Public Service District Meeting Room 21 Oak Park Drive, Hilton Head Island

This meeting will give members the opportunity to voice their views on what they think the League should be studying and advocating at both the state and local levels. We hope members will attend and participate in the following parts of the program.

Retaining and Evaluating Effective Teachers - a state study with consensus questions

This part of the meeting will be a follow-up to our November meeting. We will review the questions, discuss possible responses and determine if there is agreement resulting in consensus. Before coming to the meeting, please read the consensus questions on page 8 of this newsletter and remember to bring the newsletter to the meeting. For background information, please see the materials available at www.lwvsc.org/teacherretention.html. The Powerpoint presentation document should be especially helpful.

State Program Planning

The state League currently has positions regarding child welfare, criminal justice, education, natural resources, state and local government, state and local taxation and transportation. See page 6 of this newsletter for summaries of these positions. For more detail, please go to www.lwvsc.org and click on *Issues and Action* and then *State League Positions 2011-2013*.

After briefly reviewing our current positions, members will decide if we want to recommend that they be retained, dropped or reconsidered. We will then discuss priorities, and members will have the opportunity to propose new program items for study and action.

Local Program Planning

We will review our current local positions in order to determine whether we should recommend any changes to be considered by the membership at our annual meeting on May 15. Our current positions can be found on page 7 of this newsletter. As with state program planning, members will have the opportunity to propose new items for study and action.

Please bring any interested guests to the meeting, but explain to them that only members will be permitted to participate in the discussion.

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MARCH GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 10:00 AM, Wednesday, March 13, 2013 LowCountry Presbyterian Church, Bluffton Mayor Lisa Sulka will speak on The State of the Town of Bluffton

From the President



I wish to thank Fran Holt and Katie Miller for once again putting together a great holiday luncheon and speaker for our December membership meeting at Moss Creek Plantation. Since our last newsletter, we have also hosted Mayor Drew Laughlin of Hilton Head Island and we will host Mayor Lisa Sulka of Bluffton at our March meeting. We have continued our tradition of marching as a league at the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade both on Hilton Head and in Bluffton. Please note that our February 13 membership meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m., in order to undertake the state education consensus questions and accom-

plish the annual program planning. Materials for both of these tasks are included in this newsletter and we urge all members to attend and let your voices be heard. At the national level, the LWWUS has recently participated in an Election Day roundtable in order to identify areas of needed improvement, particularly the long lines, long waits, reduction of early voting days, and other impediments to voting. The LWWUS will develop a list of suggested legislative actions to remedy the problem areas. The LWWHHI/BA, under the guidance of Ginny Ghirardelli and Sue Feutz, is focused on the implementation of the new photo voter



LWWHHI/ BLUFFTON
President
Karen Wessel

identification law. They are working with Scott Marshall, whom we hope will speak at our May luncheon, to inform our citizens of the new law and its implementation. On a fun note, please look within these pages for information regarding our annual Winter Blahs cocktail party. I urge you to attend and enjoy socializing with your fellow league members.

REQUEST FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee would appreciate any suggestions from the members for the following offices of the League—to be elected at the Annual Meeting in May: President, Secretary, and committee chairs for Membership and Fundraising. Please e-mail your suggestions to Nominating Committee Chair Flo Rosse at floandedward@roadrunner.com.

AN INVITATION FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

The AAUW of Hilton Head Island has invited us to attend Legislative Advocacy Day 2013 at Epworth Children's Home in Columbia on February 19. The topic for the program is "Justice for our Neighbors." Sponsors are the AAUW of SC, the SC Conference of United Methodist Women and Church Women United.

For more information, please go to <http://aauw-sc.aauw.net/branches/hiltonhead>.

For information about going to the Capitol after the program, please contact Ella Setser at rhsetser@aol.com.

Holiday Luncheon

We were very fortunate to have Weston Newton, the former Beaufort County Council Chairman and newly elected Representative for District 120 of the South Carolina House of Representatives, as the speaker at our holiday luncheon on December 12. It was good too to have his wife Rose attend the luncheon. He made a point of saying that he was very grateful for her support and patience.

Representative Newton talked mostly about the changes that occurred during his thirteen years on County Council. He indicated that there had been a lot of progress, especially in terms of openness to the citizens through such means as televis-

ing meetings, better service to the citizens and greater efficiency (more service at lower cost). One item he is particularly pleased about is the Critical Lands Program, which the League has also supported strongly. After talking about the good things that have happened, he indicated that reassessments next year will result in less money unless people pay higher taxes on property valued at lower amounts. A reduction in services may be necessary.

As a new representative, Weston Newton knows he will have less influence at the state level, but he is pleased to have been appointed to the Judiciary Committee and the Special Laws

Subcommittee, assignments that seems appropriate for his background. He was pleased that an early meeting resulted in progress in improving ethics rules. One of Representative Newton's goals is to do his best to stay in touch with his constituents. He thinks having a new web site and writing for local publications will help in this regard.

During the question and answer period, topics covered included funding for highways, the fly-over, education and Act 388.

NOTE—You can see photos from the Holiday Luncheon on Page 9 of this issue.



Visit our web Site

www.lwvhi.org

Membership

We have 4 new members to welcome who joined the League in December 2012: **Oleta and Philip Harden, Nancy King and Joyce Patterson**. Thank you all for your membership and we look forward to getting to know you. With a new year starting there will be many opportunities for members to get involved in areas of interest. Please check the last page of this issue for a listing of Board members who chair a committee and contact them to get involved. Chairpersons are always looking for interested people and you are welcome to join any committee, anytime.

A special thank you goes to **Jan Billingslea** for all her recruitment efforts. We, too, can follow Jan's lead by reaching out to the women and men we know and inviting them to join the League. Spread the word about the League to your friends, neighbors, book club buddies,

church friends, golf buddies, etc. Also email our newsletter to friends who share an interest in what we do and invite them to come along with you to our meetings and events. Prospective members are all around us and just waiting to be asked to join. And don't forget to invite men to join too. Since the 1970's membership has been open to men as well as women. We currently have over 20 men in our League and would like to see that number increase. If you have a friend you would like me to contact for you, please email me the information and I will be glad to follow up (wittig4@hargray.com or 706-3735).

We have **Diane Neal** to thank for the photos in this issue taken at the annual holiday luncheon last December. She really captured the festive mood we were in. Thank you for volunteering to help make the day special.

This **February 14th** is the **League of Women Voters 93rd birthday**. For 93 years the League has been a strong voice for voters and helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. Citizens have looked to the League for unbiased information about important issues throughout this period. We are proud to be members of this well respected grassroots non-partisan, political organization. To the nonmember audience reading this issue, I invite you to join our local League and stand tall with us as we continue to be a force for change and a voice for all the people in our communities. Together, we can all make democracy work.

Happy Birthday, Leaguers!

Julie Wittig
Membership Chair

VOTER SERVICES

Voter Service Committee Gearing Up

Street Fairs, High Schools, Libraries, that's where we'll be, registering voters, distributing information, all toward that famous League purpose of informed citizen participation in government.

Last year's Bluffton Street Fair was a lot of fun; it is rewarding to be able to have direct contact with enthusiastic high school seniors; and you never know when a potential new League member will drop by our table.

If you'd like to be a part of this important League activity give one of us a call or hit us with an email. We'll call a committee meeting and make a plan.

Sue Feutz, 415-6445, feutz@yahoo.com

Ginny Ghirardelli, 363-6404, ginnyghirardelli@gmail.com

Voter Service Co-Directors

Special Election

U. S. House of Representatives

District 1

Counties: Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester

(To fill the seat vacated by Rep. Tim Scott)

Feb. 16	Last day to register to vote in Primary
March 19	Primary
April 2	Runoff, if necessary
April 6	Last day to register to vote in special election
May 7	Special Election

New Voter Photo ID Information

If you have a driver's license or other photo ID, you do not have to get a new voter registration card.

Here is information for those people wanting to obtain a voter photo ID to comply with the new voting law: You may take your voter registration card to one of these two offices, have your picture taken, and you will be given a new registration card with a photo.

Beaufort County Board of Elections & Registration

15 John Galt Rd.

Beaufort SC

843-255-6900

8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. weekdays

Bluffton Office BC Board of Elections & Registration

61 B Ulmer Rd.

Bluffton SC

843=255-6940

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. & 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. weekdays

Directions from Hilton Head Island and Bluffton to the Bluffton Office of the Beaufort County Board of Elections: From the intersection of Hwy 278 and Burnt Church Road, go south on Burnt Church Road.

After you pass the elementary school on your right, Ulmer Rd. will be the next street on your left.

You may also obtain an Identification Card at no charge from the SC Department of Motor Vehicles.

Call for more information about what documentation you will need: **843-815-6981**.

Specific information is also available at: <http://www.scdmvonline.com/dmvnew/default.aspx?n=accepted> forms of identification.



Spotlight On Anita Holcslaw



Growing up in rural Indiana, the importance of exercising one's right to vote was impressed upon me by my family from an early age; I have carried that duty with me and hopefully have passed it on to my two daughters. Last fall, I was so proud that the older of my two grandsons was, at 9, extremely interested in the presidential election - so much so that on the morning after the election he awoke even earlier than the usual 6 AM and raced to get the morning paper for the results.

During my early adulthood, while working and raising a family, I became aware of the League of Women Voters primarily through the presidential debates they moderated. However, life kept me busy with family, my career as a pharmacist and moves to Omaha, NE then the suburbs of Philadelphia, as my husband left his position as a professor to work in clinical drug development with a major pharmaceutical company. During these years, beginning in 1981, we enjoyed an annual family vacation on Hilton Head Island, knowing eventually we hoped to move here permanently.

At last, in 2005, we left our full time jobs for work as freelance medical writers and moved to paradise. While still working part time, I was casting about for meaningful ways to meet people outside my immediate community of Long Cove and at the same time become involved in something worthwhile. The high profile of the (at that time) LWVHHI in the local Island Packet as well as their nonpartisan stance (welcome in view of the divisive political climate during the first decade of the new century) prompted me to join. Almost immediately, I was invited to a discussion of voting machines at Ginny Ghirardelli's home; I was especially impressed with the extent of Ginny's knowledge of the subject, as well as the depth of the discussion. A short time later I received a call asking me to serve as the League's secretary. Being commitment-phobic after moving south and leaving a regular job and schedule, as well as feeling unqualified and inexperienced, my first impulse was to decline. After much reassurance (by Ginny if I remember correctly), I was persuaded to serve and am so grateful for that call and her persistence. As secretary, I attended the Board meetings which immediately immersed me in the activities of the League. I was again and continually amazed by these well-informed women (and men) and their involvement in local issues. Although no longer on the Board, I continue to attend the general meetings and events when possible, enjoying the company of knowledgeable people and learning so much from the programs presented, both local and national.

For the first time, last November, I was a poll worker for the presidential election. I had the privilege of assisting many people as they prepared to vote including a young woman voting for the first time, a woman who stated she had voted in every presidential election since Truman (maybe Roosevelt, my memory is not as good as hers), and several families with children who were most interested in the process. Talking with these voters as they prepared to cast their ballots really brought home to me the importance of the work of the LWV. At my present stage of life, I consider time my most valuable asset and as such try to be judicious with its use. To me, the LWVHHI/BA is an organization most deserving of any and all time I give to it.

JANUARY MEETING REVIEW

Hilton Head Island Mayor Drew Laughlin gave the annual "State of the Town" report at the membership meeting in January. The packed room heard the Mayor recount the successes and concerns of the past year.

The state of the town is good. It is in good financial shape and has the highest bond rating of any city in South Carolina. Reforms have been put in place to make the approval process for zoning and business applications easier. The framework for the new town-sponsored economic development group made up of private citizens is being created. Drainage improvements are being made. New signage makes it easier to spot street names. Power line burials are continuing.

The Recreation Center expansion program will be carried out in stages. The Sailing and Rowing Center is to be completed this year. The bicycling group that encourages the creation and extension of bike paths has helped HHI be designated as a bicycle friendly community, which appeals to potential visitors.

Cell tower improvements are being carried out. The Mayor hopes that a satellite campus for USCB will be part of the refurbishment of Coligny Center. He is also looking forward to the creation of the Chaplin Linear Park, which should start soon. The new Shelter Cove Mall project has begun and will take up most of the town staff's time during the next 6 to 8 months.

The Mayor also spoke about the challenges facing the island during the next few years: how to keep the local arts programs healthy without large subsidies, how to improve the local economy, where to find funds for projects after the mandatory property reassessment is done, how involved the town should be in the Sea Pines dredging project, how to lessen the impact of airport changes on adjacent residents.

After his prepared remarks, Mayor Laughlin took questions from the audience. The questions touched on a variety of topics: the arts, enforcing rules for bicyclists, public safety costs, the work of the Chamber of Commerce.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH CAROLINA
PO Box 8453, Columbia, SC, 29202, (803) 251-2726, ww.lwvsc.org

LWVSC POSITIONS IN BRIEF 2011-2013
(Complete LWVSC Positions available at www.lwvsc.org)

Child Welfare: LWVSC supports programs and policies that ensure quality services, personnel, financing and training at all levels of government in order to meet the needs of children and families.

Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice: LWVSC supports improvements in the function of the Department of Corrections and the Department of Juvenile Justice to include attention to the offender's responsibility to the community and his/her return to the community.

Education: LWVSC supports public state-supported education at all levels which is high quality, effective, equitable and accountable.

Natural Resources: LWVSC supports promotion of an environment that is beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, habitat preservation, waste management and water resources.

State and Local Government: LWVSC supports the development and monitoring of governmental structures, processes, and procedures that ensure efficient, representative, responsive and accountable state and local government and citizen access to, and participation in, decision-making.

State and Local Taxation: LWVSC supports a system of state and local taxation in South Carolina that is equitable and provides adequate revenue for public purposes.

Transportation: LWVSC supports regionally-balanced transportation systems which efficiently and economically meet regional needs without adversely affecting planned growth or the environment.

LWVSC ACTION PRIORITIES for 2011 - 2013

**Criminal/Juvenile Justice, Education, Judicial Diversity & Independence,
Natural Resources, Redistricting, Tax Reform, Transportation, Voter Access**

LWVSC STUDY for 2011 – 2013

Study of Evaluation and Retention of Effective Teachers in South Carolina.
(See Consensus Issues on Page 8.)

LWVHHI/BA STATEMENTS OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS For 2012

I. Preservation and protection of wetlands.

II. The LWVHHI/BA supports beach management projects that:

- a. are for the public good rather than for the benefit of private property;
- b. are part of a regional beach management plan;
- c. are designed for the specific features of each locale;
- d. are carefully and professionally monitored over the long term;
- e. make use of re-nourishment methods first and employ hard structures only when nourishment alone is ineffective;
- f. include sand re-nourishment as an integral, ongoing part of any hard structure design;
- g. 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;
- h. require mitigation, re-design, or removal of hard structures that adversely affect nearby beaches;
- i. establish clear goals and quantitatively designed measures of their success.

III. 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

IV. Transportation:

- A. Accommodation Tax (A-Tax) monies may be an appropriate source of funding for regional public transportation.
- B. 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:

1. Election process in Beaufort County: monitor redistricting and HAVA implementation.
2. Beachfront and waterway management
3. Education in Beaufort County, including post-secondary and early childhood through grade 12 levels, and the school budget process
4. Hilton Head Comprehensive Plan



Study on Evaluation and Retention of Effective Teachers, 2011-2013

Consensus Questions:

1. There is solid evidence and widespread agreement by the education community that:
 - A. An effective teacher is the most important school-based determinant of academic achievement.
 - B. An effective teacher is critical to provision of a high-quality education.
 - C. School districts should ensure that there are effective teachers for all students.

Agree/Disagree

2. In an effort to identify and retain effective teachers, many states are adopting comprehensive evaluation policies that evaluate teachers at least in part according to student achievement. Should student achievement be a factor in rating teacher effectiveness?

Yes/No

3. If the answer to question #2 is “no”, what action should be taken to assure that every child has an effective teacher?

Please explain.

4. If the answer to question #2 is “yes”, should all teachers be evaluated?

Yes/No

5. It has been documented that many school districts fail to recognize and respond to the variations in the effectiveness of teachers due in part to rating systems that have two categories: satisfactory and unsatisfactory. Should an evaluation system be able to distinguish between superior, average and Ineffective teachers?

Yes/No

If “yes”, should the rating scale contain three or more categories, e.g., highly effective, effective, needs improvement, ineffective?

Yes/No

6. Which of the following are appropriate uses for teacher evaluations: (Check all that apply)
 - a. Provide feedback to assist teachers in developing their skills?
 - b. Inform decisions about retention and dismissal?
 - c. Make teacher assignments, e.g. lead teacher, department chair?
 - d. Inform decisions about compensation?
 - e. Other

League of Women Voters of South Carolina Study on Evaluation and Retention of Effective Teachers, 2011-2013



Continued from Page 8

7. What are the essential elements of a fair evaluation system? (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Clear, widely accepted standards
 - b. Trained evaluators
 - c. Consistency among evaluators
 - d. Other

 8. Should teachers participate in developing and implementing the evaluation system?

Yes/No

 9. Should South Carolina modify its existing teacher evaluation system to incorporate:
 - a. More definitive measures of student academic achievement to evaluate teacher performance?

Yes/No

 - b. A rating scale of three or more categories?

Yes/No

 10. Who should be responsible for the cost of evaluation: (Check one)
 - a. State
 - b. Local School District
 - c. Combination
 - d. Other
-

Photos from the Holiday Luncheon



District 120 Representative Weston Newton was guest speaker.



Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2012—2013

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held on Thursdays at 9:45 A.M.,
Location: Coastal States Bank,
98 Main Street,
Hilton Head Island.

Dates: Thursdays. 2013—Feb. 7, March 7, Apr. 4, and
May 2

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 13—10:00 A.M. State consensus meeting on
Evaluating and Retaining Effective Teachers and Local and
State Program Planning. Location: Hilton Head Public Service
District Meeting Room, Hilton Head Island.

March 3—5 to 7 PM at the home of Flo Rosse, 6 Primrose
Lane. **Annual End of Winter Blahs Party**. Attendees should
bring an appetizer to share. Beverages supplied. More details
to come later.

March 13—10:00 A.M. **Mayor Lisa Sulka** will speak on **The
State of the Town of Bluffton**. Location: LowCountry Pres-
byterian Church, Bluffton.

April 10—10:00 A.M. **Elaine Faithful** of the S.C. Coalition
for Healthy Families or **Stacie Thompson** of the New Morn-
ing Foundation will speak about **effective advocacy and state
legislation affecting families**. Location: LowCountry Presby-
terian Church, Bluffton.

May 8—11:30 A.M. **Annual Meeting and Luncheon**.
Scott Marshall, Executive Director of the Beaufort County
Board of Education, will speak. Location: Port Royal Club-
house, Hilton Head Island.

OFFICERS

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