

Lighthouse

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



Inside this Issue

Report on the May 14 Annual Meeting	1
Recap of Meeting Speaker, Duffie Stone	1
Message from President	2
New Members and In Memoriam - George Dowlen	2
Summary of LWVSC Annual Convention	3
Youth Voter Registration Project	4
Mark Your Calendars	6
Officers and Board	6

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MAY 14, 2014, AT THE COUNTRY CLUB OF HILTON HEAD

President Loretta Warden called the meeting to order at 11:30 A.M. Members approved our existing Public Policy Positions for the 2014-2015 League year and the proposed budget for 2014-2015. (For details, see the April Lighthouse.) No changes were made to our current bylaws.

Members unanimously approved the following slate of officers as presented by Nominating Committee Chair Karen Wessel: Vice President, Program Chair: Nancy Williams, Treasurer: Jan Billingslea, Newsletter Editor: Joan Kinne-Shulman, Voter Service Co-Chairs: Oleta Harden and Katie Miller, Action/Advocacy Chair: Sally McGarry, Membership Co-Chairs: Sue Yearwood and Gloria Statham, Nominating Committee Chair: Julie Wittig and members Diane Neal and Sue Yearwood.

President Warden announced the League's continued support of LWVSC's efforts on ethics legislation, a scheduled coffee to attract members, and the distribution of the membership list via e-mail.

The business portion of the meeting concluded with presentations to outgoing Vice President Fran Holt and Board members Dot Law, Sue Feutz, Ginny Ghirardelli, Pam Hollinger, and Katie Miller.

Following the social period and lunch we heard from guest speaker 14th Circuit Solicitor Duffie Stone, who represents Beaufort and four other counties. An account of his speech can be found on this page.

After the speech, President Warden convened a pro forma meeting of the new Board to act on the appointment of four Directors for one-year terms: Education: Kathy Quirk, Hospitality: Elizabeth Krise, Local Issues/Observer Corps: Joan Kinne-Shulman, and Communications: Janet Law and Sandy Stern.

LWVHHBA Annual Meeting Speaker: Duffie Stone

Solicitor Duffie Stone, the chief prosecuting attorney for the Fourteenth Judicial Circuit-- which includes Allendale, Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties-- was the guest speaker for our May 14 annual meeting. In an engaging participatory talk, Stone educated us about the Solicitor's role and the issues and challenges of his office.

The Fourteenth Circuit includes the poorest county in the state (Allendale) and is the fourth most violent circuit in the state. Stone asked us what we thought accounted for the largest number of cases in his district. Respondents incorrectly identified drugs and domestic violence as possibilities. Although drugs are probably the root cause of 80 percent of all crime, a small number of career criminals (20 percent), who commit three to five crimes per year, are responsible for most of the crimes (80 percent) committed in our district according to Stone.

Continued on Page 5

Message from the President



Mid June saw a transition gathering of new Board members, returning Board members and retiring Board members. This gathering assures that we know each other well enough to guarantee collaboration; it transmits the wealth of past experiences and envisions our League future in 2014-2015. This year's gathering also was a platform for past VP, Fran Holt to share her experiences at the LWVUS Convention in Dallas. Do read her summary on page 3. And, if you wonder why you belong to League - paragraph two of her article says it all.

Our focus for this fall will be preparing our community for the November elections. We anticipate continued voter registration activity, candidate forums and referendum discussions. All of these items are time sensitive and our program plan-

ning and voter services group will be very busy. Lighthouse and our website will be a good source of meeting dates as the candidates and referenda are officially identified. We have been invited to present some of this voter information at an Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at USCB on September 29th.

Our General Meetings will expose us and the broader communities in which we live to several of the big issues—human trafficking, climate change, the agenda for the upcoming state legislative session—just some of the topics suggested at the meeting. Our Education Committee will provide information and action suggestions. And is there anyone who does not want to be involved in hosting “the best state convention ever”? April 24-26



LWVHHI/Bluffton
President
Loretta Warden

will be our League's opportunity to showcase the low country and support the growth and actions of fellow LWVSC members from all over the state.

It will be a busy year—how glad we are to see our membership growing as we will need all hands on deck!

Happy 100th Birthday to Long-time League Member

Peggy Downward

Welcome to New Members

We welcome : Anne Grimsley Bander, Rebecca Cooper, Mary Innis, Patricia Montgomery, Pamela Redmon, and Mary St. Louis.

In Memoriam

We mourn the death of George Dowlen in mid-May. George served as a volunteer in the Observer Corps and monitored issues related to natural resources. We extend our deep sympathy to his wife, member Dee Ann.

A Perspective and Summary of the LWVUS Convention and a Thank You

Inspiring is the word that best describes how I feel about the national League convention that I was fortunate enough to attend. I wish all Leaguer members and potential members could have joined the 700 or so members in Dallas from June 6 to 10. Inspiration came from interaction with fellow delegates from South Carolina (9 of us counting 2 now on the national board) and from all over the country. It was an impressive group committed to what the League does and who share a love for the League. If any of you went on Twitter, you could have gained a pretty good idea of what we were doing. Many members tweeted a lot!



We care about educating and registering voters and a lot of important issues including voters rights, money in politics, climate change, common core standards in education, school choice, election systems, redistricting, and carbon emissions, and we are determined to try to make a difference on these and other issues. Working together, I believe we can do a lot. This will be especially true if we make an effort to grow our membership, especially among younger people, and to encourage our members to be more involved, although also continuing to value the membership of those who now choose not to be very active for one reason or another. Part of what helps us make a difference is our belief in the importance of civility, a word mentioned frequently at convention.

Visit our Web Site

www.lwvhi.org

I am happy to report that the president of LWVUS, Elizabeth Macnamara, was reelected for a third term despite being challenged by a very enthusiastic and capable opponent, Deidre Macnab, president of the Florida League. I was torn about whom to vote for until I saw Elizabeth in action. I feared that she might suffer from burn out, but I was reassured and amazed when I saw her expertise in presiding over the convention, especially when there were amendments to the amendments and disagreements over a word here and there!

For information about the convention, please go to the national League website, lwv.org, or to Facebook, where both the national and state Leagues have pages. There will also be information in the summer issue of the *SC Voter*. My personal attempt at providing an abbreviated summary of what we accomplished follows.

I. ELECTIONS: Elizabeth Macnamara was reelected as president. All other nominees were unopposed. These include two from South Carolina; Peggy Appler, and Barbara Zia,

II. PROGRAM:

A. We adopted, by concurrence with the LWV New Jersey, a strong position on Human Trafficking. It includes all forms of domestic and international human trafficking of adults and children, including sex and labor trafficking, prosecution of traffickers and abusers, services for victims, and education.

B. Adoption of a comprehensive three-part program combining study and review of key, specific structures of American democracy, consisting of:

1. A study of the process of amending the U.S. Constitution, including constitutional conventions;

2. A review and update of the League position on campaign finance in light of forty years of change since the Watergate reforms, in order to enhance member understanding of the new schemes and structures used to influence elections and erode protections against corruption in our political process, and to review possible responses to counter them in the current environment of rapid change; and,

3. A review of the redistricting process for the U.S. Congress, through the existing redistricting task force for the purpose of developing action steps.

C. Adoption of a motion to retain all current LWVUS Positions in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy.

III. Resolutions were also passed. They concerned quick and effective action on the newly adopted program item on structures of American democracy (see Program Item B above), support for gradually increasing the cost of carbon emissions and restoring voting rights to felons who have been paroled or are on probation.

IV. A budget of \$10.3 million was approved and then amended to include funding a task force intended to increase minority membership in the League.

Thank you for sending me to the convention. It was a great experience. Thank you very much too for the kind words and parting gift I was given as I came off the board at our local annual meeting in May.

Fran Holt



Youth Voter Registration Project

Voter Service Committee members registered students on April 24 at Battery Creek High School in Beaufort and at Hilton Head High School on May 2. At both events we were assisted by staff from the Beaufort County Board of Elections.

Our presence at Battery Creek was during the three lunch periods, in the hallway outside the cafeteria. **Barbara de Neeve, Janet Law** were assisted by **Brandon Harris, Vernon Kemp,** and **Kristina Weitz**, Board of Elections staff members. Six students and one teacher were registered. We learned that **Patricia Grooms**, Office Manager at that school, registers students all during the year.

At Hilton Head High School on May 2, we were able to participate in a program for seniors in the auditorium. **Sue Feutz** presented a video, "Rock The Vote", a history of voting rights, and discussed the importance of voting. **Karen Arms, Marlene Coe, Anita Holcslaw, Katie Miller,** and **Nancy Williams**, were assisted by Board of Elections staff members, and registered 40 students.

We worked with the staff at Bluffton High School to schedule an event there. We were scheduled for Field Day May 23, then after postponement were rescheduled for May 16. That wasn't workable for them after all, so we will try again next year. Sue gave voter registration forms to **Sandra Bedoski**, Media Assistant, who was very helpful in trying to make arrangements for us. Sandra worked individually with the seniors and registered 70 students. Sue returned to the school to pick up the forms and take them to the Board of Elections before leaving on her trip to Paris.

We learned that Technical College of the Lowcountry had extensive in house voter registration efforts in conjunction with "Women in History Month", so they did not need us.

In summary, we registered 232 individuals at four high schools and USCB, and concluded the Youth Voter Registration Project with a report to LWVSC.

Ginny Ghirardelli

Therefore, since Stone assumed his office, he has focused on the criminal, not the crime. Rather than organizing his staff around specific crimes, which had previously been the case, he has organized them around criminals. This tactic is not unlike the practice of the 1920's and 30's when Al Capone was identified as a "public enemy" and finally apprehended for tax evasion.

Stone addressed some other common misconceptions. One is that imposing mandatory minimum sentences deters crime. Rather than deterring crime, these sentences have resulted in the jailing of non-violent offenders and the overcrowding of our jails while doing little to reduce crime. Another is that criminal activity increases in periods of recession and higher unemployment. In fact, recessions don't alter the crime rate as career criminals don't have jobs. Other misconceptions are that overcrowding of our prisons and detention centers would be alleviated by better plea offers and the reduction of bonds. Again, it is the focus on the criminal that is most effective in reducing crime and reducing the number of persons in our detention centers.

Since this change in focus went into effect in 2009, Stone and his team of prosecutors have achieved a 90 percent conviction rate in five years. In addition, the population of the Beaufort County Detention Center was cut in half within six months; within a year, the detention center was under capacity. Before 2010, there was talk of rebuilding or building a new detention center at the cost of \$40 to \$100 million. Since then, there has been no such talk as available resources have been directed to the right problem.

Another challenge that Stone faces is reducing the time to trial. At present it takes an average of 369 days, somewhat better than the "poor state" average, for a case to come to trial. Currently, eight attorneys handle about 300 cases each per year. By increasing the number of attorneys to 12.3 at the cost of \$420,000--less than one half percent of Beaufort County's budget, all cases could be prosecuted within six months. According to Stone, this is a fixable problem.

Stone's job is not just one of prosecution but also of prevention. He recognizes the importance of focusing on children. In 2010 he instituted a multi-disciplinary juvenile court for offenders 13 years and older. This court addresses mental health, alcohol, drug, parenting, and other issues affecting behavior and has lowered the recidivism rate for juveniles to 11 percent compared to 40 percent for all offenders. Progress has been made but there is more to be done.

Stone appreciated the opportunity to educate us on these important issues and expressed an interest in returning on another occasion.

Nancy Williams





Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2014 - 2015

BOARD MEETINGS

Future Board meetings will be held on
Thursdays, 9/11, 10/2, 11/6 and 12/4 at 9:45 A.M.
Location: Palmetto Electric Meeting Room
111 Mathews Drive
Hilton Head Island

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

OFFICERS

President:	Loretta Warden	681-8450
Vice-President, Program Chair:	Nancy Williams	681-4212
Treasurer:	Jan Billingslea	815-3743
Secretary:	Phylis Giglinto	705-5866

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DON'T MISS THIS CANDIDATE FORUM

Wednesday, September 17, 10:00 - 11:30 A.M.
Place to be determined.
State Supt. Of Education: Molly Spearman,
Republican; Tom Thompson, Democrat.
Interested, but not yet confirmed, Ed Murray,
American Party.

For more information, please refer to the
League's web site at www.lwvhhi.org or contact
Nancy Williams, 681-4212.

BOARD

Action/Advocacy	Sally McGarry	342-9254
Communications	Janet Law	671-4280
	Sandy Stern	342-4834
Education:	Kathy Quirk	836-2892
Government Issues/Observer Corps:	Joan Kinne-Shulman	842-9246
Hospitality:	Elizabeth Krise	681-5783
Membership:	Sue Yearwood	705-3918
	Gloria Statham	815-5763
Newsletter:	Joan Kinne-Shulman	842-9246
Voters Services:	Oleta Harden	815-6294
	Katie Miller	681-8448