

Lighthouse

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



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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HHI/BLUFFTON AREA
 APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
 10:00 A.M. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014
 ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH – PARISH HALL
 3001 Meeting St., Hilton Head Island**

Food, Farming and Sustainability will be discussed at what we know will be an interesting and enlightening meeting. Information will be provided by **Dr. Gerry Dukes** and **Zachary Snipes** of the Clemson Cooperative Extension Service; **Kevin Schoneman**, a League member, who farms in Iowa and **Teresa Wade**, Executive Director of Experience Green. Topics covered will include the current state of agriculture in South Carolina, the recently passed federal Farm Bill, genetically modified organism (GMO) seeds, local efforts in regard to the food supply and sustainability. Following the presentation, there will be a Question and Answer period. Please note that this will not be a consensus meeting. Consequently, members are encouraged to bring guests, and the public is also invited to attend.

Directions:

From the west (off-island), take Business 278 (Wm. Hilton Pkwy.), turn left onto Wilborn Rd. (first traffic light after Gumtree Rd. and across from Jarvis Park), then turn right onto Main St. and left onto Meeting Street.

From the south end of the island, take the Cross Island Pkwy, exit at Gumtree Rd., turn right onto US 278 and proceed as above.

**ANNUAL MEETING & LUNCHEON
 WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014**

**COUNTRY CLUB OF HILTON HEAD in HILTON HEAD PLANTATION
 70 Skull Creek Drive, Hilton Head Island**

Guest speaker: “Duffie” Stone, 14th Circuit Solicitor

Cost: \$26.00 per person Guests welcome

Directions: From Cypress Gate (off Squire Pope Road) take Seabrook Drive to second left onto Skull Creek Drive, club is on the right in about 4/10 miles.

For more details and reservations, see page 7 of this *Lighthouse*.

Message from the President



THE LEAGUE AND TIF---

As the Town of Hilton Head Island contemplates the extension of its TIF our League is aware of our commitment in our Local Public Policy statements to monitor TIF. TIF or Tax Increment Financing is a method of funding public investments in an area slated for redevelopment (the TIF district) by recapturing for a designated time period, all or a portion of the increased tax revenue that may result if the public investment in redevelopment stimulates private investment. As private investments add to the tax base within the TIF district the increased tax revenues for a designated time period are placed in a special fund that can only be used for public purposes permitted by law in the TIF district

SOME HISTORY---

In 2001 the League studied the provisions of the original TIF proposed by the Town of Hilton Head Island and adopted a position in favor of the December 18, 2001 advisory referendum on tax increment financing. The League held a public meeting to help the community to have a more complete understanding of the issues. You will recognize the names of some of the panelists for that

event as they are still local League members—Dorothy Perkins, Janet Law, Fran Holt and myself. The Advisory Referendum was supported by the community and the Town Council abided by that referendum. The designated time period for that TIF was 15 years, from 1999 to 2014.

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF TIF —

Flash forward to 2014 when an extended TIF to cover the period FY16-FY25 is being considered. The boundaries of the TIF district would remain the same. An extension of the TIF requires agreement of other taxing authorities—Hilton Head PSD, Beaufort County School District and Beaufort County Council. The first two of these authorities have indicated their “intent” to participate and the Finance Committee of County Council will be considering same shortly. All of these partner actions are “intent” only and will require their further action. The Town requested “intent” in order to develop and refine its amended TIF before meeting the required process for distribution to partners and public hearings.



LWVHHI/Bluffton
President
Loretta Warden

As we contemplate our role in the monitoring of TIF and its proposed extension we will value the feedback of our observers at the various municipal meetings. We will look for clarity as to the projects, the actions of the other taxing authorities, and the planned opportunities for public understanding of this fiscal tool. Believing as we do that public information is the key to good government our League will do its best to enable that flow of information on a TIF extension.

Loretta Warden



Spotlight on Paul Russo



Paul Russo

Paul has been active in advocacy since the late 1950s' when he was involved with the Bronx Catholic Interracial Council. The Council would give presentations to Church organizations on racial justice.

He endeavored to organize, but unsuccessfully, clerical employees in forming a union when he was employed with Metropolitan Life Insurance. However, one good result of his employment with the Met was that he met his wife, Susan; they had two children. Susan passed away in 1986.

Paul entered federal service in 1964 as a U.S. Customs Inspector and became active as a union steward, chapter vice-president, and legislative officer of the chapter. He also volunteered for 8 years as a Long Term Ombudsman , advocating for residents of 2 nursing homes in Staten Island, N.Y..

After retiring from the government in 1997 he became a State Certified Senior Benefits Specialist with the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. He advised and helped seniors in 3 senior centers on Staten Island, advocating for them on consumer matters, applying for Medicaid, food stamps, heating assistance, home repairs, Medicare premium buy in program, etc.. He also gave lectures on public benefits to AARP and senior organizations, besides being an instructor of new volunteers.

Since moving to Sun City Hilton Head, in 2004, he was President of the Sun City Widow-Widowers Club, and is Legislative Volunteer for AARP, and President of the Sun City Democrats. As president of the Democratic Club a major focus of his has been opposition to voter I.D. laws, conducting letter writing campaigns to our state legislators, and his writing articles about the law in the Club's monthly newsletter. A committee of members has been formed to participate in voter registration drives at farmers markets, supermarkets, and theaters.

Paul Russo, 67 Cypress Run, Bluffton SC 29909,
[843-705-2674](tel:843-705-2674)

Visit our web Site

www.lwvhi.org

ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION

The following pages contain proposed local public policy positions and committee reports to be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on May 14 at The Country Club of Hilton Head in Hilton Head Plantation. Our By-Laws require that the reports and proposed positions be made available to the membership a month before the meeting.



Note: The By-Laws Committee made up of Fred Holt, Chair, and Caroline McVitty reported that no changes are needed at this time.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/BLUFFTON AREA PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS As Amended May 15, 2013

I. Natural Resources:

The LWVHHI/BA supports the preservation and protection of wetlands, area beaches, and local waterways, including, but not restricted to Calibogue Sound, the May River, the Colleton River and the Okatie River.

II. 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.

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

1. Election process in Beaufort County: monitor redistricting and Helping America Vote Act (HAVA) implementation
2. Education in Beaufort County, including early childhood through grade 12 levels and post-secondary education and the school budget process and school policies.
3. Hilton Head, Bluffton area and Beaufort County Comprehensive Plans
4. Ward I Master Land Use Plan
5. Beaufort County Regional Plans, including multi-jurisdictional regional plans, and implementation of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan
6. Hilton Head Island Airport Master Plan
7. Public Safety
8. Home Rule
9. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for support of public projects on Hilton Head Island
10. Water and sewer service

REPORT FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The committee, consisting of Karen Wessel, Chair, Ginny Ghirardelli, Jan Billingslea, Katie Miller and Julie Wittig, recommend the following slate of officers.

Vice President: Nancy Williams (May 2014-May 2016)
Treasurer: Jan Billingslea (May 2014-May 2016)
Newsletter Editor: Joan Kinne-Shulman (May 2014-May 2016)
Voters' Service: Oleta Harden and Katie Miller (May 2014-May 2016)
Action/Advocacy: Sally McGarry (May 2014-May 2015)
Nominating Committee: Julie Wittig, Chair, Diane Neal, Sue Yearwood (May 2014-May 2015)
Membership: Co-Chair Gloria Statham (May 2014-May 2015)



REPORT FROM THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

The committee, consisting of Bob Ghirardelli, Chair, Dot Law and Ginny Rice, propose the following budget.

Proposed LWV-HHI&BA BUDGET for 2014-2015

INCOME

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Dues | \$ 5500 |
| Member Contributions | 1500 |
| Events | 3000 |
| Total Income | \$ 10,000 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Events | \$ 3000 |
| Education and Service (Lighthouse, other publications, voter service, website) | 550 |
| Per Member Payments LWVUS | 3000 |
| LWVSC | 1400 |
| Fund Raising & Membership Development | 300 |
| Administration & Miscellaneous | 450 |
| State Convention Allocation! (Registration, Host Events) | 1300 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 10,000 |

High School Voter Registration



The Voter Service Committee continues to work on increasing the number of high schools in which we can offer voter registration as a part of our participation in the LWVUS Youth Voter Registration Project, supported by the Education Fund.!

We have developed a program in which, at an assembly for the senior class, we show a short video, "Rock The Vote", briefly discuss why we should vote, and then, with staff from the Beaufort County Office of Registration and Voting, register the students to vote.

Scheduled so far are: Hilton Head High School on March 28, and Beaufort High School on April 11. We have met with or contacted Bluffton High School, Battery Creek High School and hope to have events in those schools. We learned that the Jasper County Schools are well served by the Jasper County Board of Elections, and that the NAACP sponsors voter registration at Whale Branch High School. The private schools in our area were contacted, but we were not able to schedule events there.

Committee members are Karen Arms, Jan Billingslea, Marlene Coe, Barbara de Neeve, Oleta Harden, George Kanuck, Maggie and Mike Seymour, and Julie Wittig.

Ginny Ghirardelli
Sue Feutz

State of the Town of Bluffton

We had a great crowd at our March meeting to hear about the State of the Town of Bluffton as reported by League member, Mayor Lisa Sulka. As always, the mayor was enthusiastic and informative. She is obviously very proud of the Bluffton "state of mind" and its being the "heart of the Lowcountry". She told us about how annexation (initiated by the annexed areas) has resulted in the growth of the town from one to fifty-four square miles in about a ten to twelve year period. Currently, the biggest growth area is Buckwalter Place. She emphasized that the town is pro-business and believes in the importance of partnering with businesses. She discussed the progress being made by the partnership with Clemson University to establish the Dan Ryan Center for Innovation, which helps new businesses build from the ground up. In discussing what a local option sales tax ("lost") might do for the town, she made it clear that the town has already agreed upon its priorities. Its Strategic Plan gives highest priority to branding the town, Stoney Creek wetland restoration, undertaking phase two of Oyster Factory Park and hooking up to sewers. The importance of the May River to the town is key and, as the mayor said, it can best be appreciated by seeing and going out on it. For more information about the Town of Bluffton, go to www.townofbluffton.sc.gov.

RESERVATION FOR MAY 14 LUNCHEON

Please make your reservation at the Country Club of Hilton Head by sending a check made out to LWVHHI/BA with the following form to Katie Miller, 17 Celosia Lane, Hilton Head Island, SC 29926 by May 6. If there are questions or it is near or past the deadline, please call Katie at 681-6448.

Suggested arrival time at the Country Club: 11:15 am. The Annual Meeting will begin at 11:30 am; we will act on several reports, approve the 2014-15 budget, meet nominees for election to the League Board, and acknowledge the service of retiring Board members.

Name(s)

Phone number

Enclosed payment: \$26 per person x number of reservations =
\$ _____

Please indicate your choice of entrée

_____ **Salmon spinach salad** – Seared salmon on spinach, with pears, sundried cranberries, red onions, walnuts and apples

OR

_____ **Roasted chicken** on pilaf with seasonal vegetables

Fresh rolls and butter

Dessert—Dark chocolate mousse with chocolate stick

Coffee/ tea service

Vegetarian or other special meals available if requested in advance.





Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2012—2013

BOARD MEETINGS

Future Board meetings will be held on
Thursdays, Apr 3, and May 1, 2014 at 9:45 A.M.

Location: Coastal States Bank
98 Main Street
Hilton Head Island

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

OFFICERS

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| President: | Loretta Warden | 681-8450 |
| Vice-President, Program Chair: | Fran Holt | 837-3436 |
| Treasurer: | Dot Law | 842-5622 |
| Secretary: | Phylis Giglinto | 705-5866 |

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

April 9, 2014, 10:00 A.M., Program on Food, Farming and Sustainability at Parish Hall, **All Saints Episcopal Church**, Hilton Head Island. For details, see page 1 of this newsletter.

May 14, 2014, 11:30 A.M., Annual Meeting, social time and luncheon at Country Club of Hilton Head. **14th Circuit Court Solicitor “Duffie” Stone** will be the guest speaker. For details and reservation form, see pages 1 and 7 of this newsletter.

For more information, please refer to the League’s web site at www.lwvghi.org or contact Fran Holt at 837-3436 or fran-holthhbl@gmail.com.

BOARD

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Action/Advocacy | Sally McGarry | 342-9254 |
| Education: | Pamela Hollinger | 706-9928 |
| Government Issues/Observer Corps: | Joan Kinne-Shulman | 842-9246 |
| Hospitality: | Katie Miller | 681-6448 |
| Membership: | Sue Yearwood | 705-3918 |
| | Gloria Statham | 815-5763 |
| Newsletter: | Joan Kinne-Shulman | 842-9246 |
| Public Relations/Publicity: | Janet Law | 671-4280 |
| Voters Services: | Ginny Ghirardelli | 363-6404 |
| | Sue Fuetz | 415-6445 |