



Lighthouse

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

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
10:00 A.M., FEBRUARY 12, 2014
HILTON HEAD PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT MEETING ROOM
21 Oak Park Dr. (off Matthews Dr.), Hilton Head Island

This meeting will give members the opportunity to have their say on what the national and local Leagues should be doing and to learn about the legislative agenda of our state League. The meeting will be divided into three parts.

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I. National Program Planning – We will discuss our current national public policy positions and a proposal for a new study on the primary process. We can also discuss suggestions for other new studies. We will make recommendations on one or two of the positions or proposals. Final determination of what positions and new studies are adopted will be made at the LWVUS Convention in June. Our delegates to the convention will appreciate the guidance they receive from the members at this meeting. To prepare for this part of the meeting, please refer to:

- A. **Summary of National Public Policy Positions** - on Page 5 of this *Lighthouse*
- B. **Article by Ginny Ghirardelli on Proposed New Study on the Primary Process** – on Page 9 of this *Lighthouse*

For more detailed information on our national public policy positions, please consult ***Impact on Issues***, which can be found at www.lwv.org by typing “positions” into the search box. .

II. Local Program Planning – We will discuss our current local public policy positions and also any proposals for new studies. We will then make recommendations, which will be acted on by the members at our annual meeting in May.

To prepare for this part of the meeting, please refer to: **LWVHHI/BA Public Policy Positions-** on Page 4 of this *Lighthouse* and also on our website, lwvhhhi.org.

III. The Legislative Agenda of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina - We will discuss legislation that LWVSC plans to follow in the current session of the General Assembly. This will include legislation having to do with **ethics reform** as well as other subjects of interest to Leaguers. For more information, please refer to: **Article by State Advocacy Chair Sally McGarry** on Page 10 of this *Lighthouse*.

Please note that guests are welcome to attend this meeting, but they will not be allowed to participate in the national and local program planning parts of the meeting. Please note too that it would be helpful to have members **bring a copy of this *Lighthouse* to the meeting.**

Message from the President



Thanks to the passion and work of our Voter Services Committee under the leadership of co-chairs, Ginny Ghirardelli and Sue Feutz, **we have been awarded a \$500 grant from the 2014 LWV Youth Voter Registration Project.** Our Voter Services Committee has developed an ambitious plan for spring registration at area high schools and colleges in addition to their continuing community outreach. Voter registration will always be a League priority. Contact Sue or Ginny if you are interested in participating in this effort.

Julie Bell, Membership co-chair and a Board appointee to the Nominating Committee, is in the process of moving both home and business from our area and will not be able to continue in these positions. We wish Julie well in her new location and thank her for her willingness to be a participant in our League. In the interim Katie Miller will take Julie's place on the Nominating Committee and Sue Yearwood will assure that Membership efforts and data collection continue. Thanks, Katie and Sue.

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS SC CONVENTION
WILL BE HOSTED BY THE
LWV HILTON HEAD
ISLAND/BLUFFTON AREA
APRIL 24-26 2015.**

. What a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Low Country and our active League. Our League while not responsible for the program content of the Convention will be responsible for all of the "arrangements" -- facility, food plans, social events, registration. It is these "arrangements" that support the program and enhance the overall experience for attendees.

I am pleased to announce that Pamela Hollinger will be our Convention Chair. Pamela has had experience in host planning with other organizations. Securing a site is the first priority as we are a high demand area for vacationers and conventions. As time goes on we will need many helpers and know that our league members will be ready. If you have a particular interest



LWVHHI/Bluffton
President
Loretta Warden

or expertise don't fail to let Pam or me know.

It is with enthusiasm that we accept the responsibility for hosting an outstanding state convention in 2015.

Loretta Warden

State of the Town of Hilton Head Island

Because many of our Lighthouse readers attended the January 8, 2014 meeting and/or read about it in Tom Barton's comprehensive article in the following day's *Island Packet*, this article will not be a recap of Mayor Drew Laughlin's informative and well received talk. However, it should be noted that the mayor was very upbeat both about what has recently been achieved in the town and what he hopes will be achieved. He was also very gracious in taking the time to answer questions during and after the Question and Answer Period.

When he explained the importance of Tax Increment Financing, League President Loretta Warden suggested that we follow up by paying particular attention to that item during local program planning at our February 12 meeting. Another way to follow up on the meeting is to go to the town's website, www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov, where much information on the town's projects, including the Chaplin Linear Park, is available.

Please note that Mayor Lisa Sulka, a member of our League, will report on the State of the Town of Bluffton at our March 12 General Membership Meeting.



Spotlight on Nancy Williams



I am a League of Women Voters member because I believe--as did our nation's founders--that an educated, informed electorate is the foundation of a democracy. I also believe--as did Carrie Chapman Catt--that women have a unique perspective and important role to play in voting and policy-setting.

I've been involved in civic affairs for most of my adult life. As a young teacher hoping to transition to a career in broadcast journalism, I covered town council meetings and local elections as a part-time radio reporter in Connecticut. As a state (SC) and local volunteer for Planned Parenthood and the executive director of Literacy Volunteers of the Lowcountry, I lobbied our elected officials in Washington D. C. on women's reproductive health and adult education issues. I have also worked for the election of candidates--many of them women--whose positions I've supported.

Although I've been a member of the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head and Bluffton since the mid '90's, it's only been since my early 2013 retirement that I've had time to actively participate. The issues I care most about are education, voters' rights, and healthcare--especially women's reproductive rights. I look forward to continued involvement in the League



Visit our web Site

www.lwvghi.org

End the Winter Blahs Party

Join League Friends to Welcome Spring

Cocktail Party

Sunday, March 2, 2014 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

**McGarry Residence 6 Anglers Pond Court
Hilton Head Plantation***

Please bring hors d'oeuvres for six

**Your hostesses, Sally McGarry & Felicia Pascal,
will provide wine and soft drinks**

Guests are welcome Regrets only 342-9254

***Please call if you will need a gate pass.**

**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
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SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of the United States

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision-making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

Privatization

Ensure transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.





INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.



SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Federal Role in Public Education. Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Immigration

Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.



Support Services. Provide essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty

The LWWUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

Sentencing Policy

The LWWUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWWUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

New Study Item To Be Proposed

The Ohio League of Women Voters will present this proposal for adoption of a new national study item at the LWVUS Biennial Convention in Dallas in June. At our February General Meeting we will be discussing national and local program planning. I believe that voting issues are a priority for the League, and would support the proposal. As a group we need to decide if we have enough members to form a committee to read the study material, and share it with the members by way of newsletter articles and meetings as appropriate.



From the Ohio League of Women Voters:

We propose a national study to explore state, county or local primary election provisions to determine the kinds of primaries that have the best chance to increase voter participation and provide competitive general elections. The study would concentrate on publicly administered primaries but would also consider effects of party-conducted nominating processes and look at how independent and minor-party voters' interests are considered in primaries.

This study will:

- Select and classify examples of primary systems from federal to municipal primaries;
 - Gather turnout and other information describing the nomination procedures from state election laws, constitutions, and county or city government charters;
 - Compare current primary systems to newly proposed variants currently in the public discussion;
 - Formulate general principles about primary systems that would likely increase turnout, result in more competitive general elections, and possibly lessen political polarization in all elections.

The need for such a study is grounded in recent election reporting and research which shows that most state and federal legislative district lines have been drawn in ways that exaggerate political homogeneity, resulting in non-representative, skewed legislatures and unaccountable "safe seats." As general elections become increasingly predictable, primaries are the elections where one's vote has a realistic possibility of influencing an election outcome. And yet, partisan primaries often prohibit cross-over voting and appear to disenfranchise non-affiliated or thirdparty voters. With traditionally sparse turnout (largely each party's activist base), primary winners then commonly advance to a weakly contested or uncontested general election.

Ginny Ghirardelli, Co-Chair, Voter Service

Action and Advocacy at the State Level



The 2014 session of the South Carolina General Assembly has begun, and our League leaders are ready to get back to work, lobbying for legislative action to improve the functioning of government at the state and local levels and protect voting rights.

Ethics reform continues to be at the top of the League's agenda. The Senate will take up a bill passed by the House in the last session, H. 3945. The League supports a "working group amendment" to this bill, JUD3945.078, which includes reasonable provisions for income disclosure and would provide for both legislative and executive ethics complaints to be filed with a newly formed state Ethics Commission, instead of with House, Senate and State Ethics Commissions. Full funding of the new Commission is essential. The League has concerns about the ability of current office-holders to vote for real reform.

Restructuring of state government to redress the dominance of the state legislature, at the expense of the executive and judicial branches, was addressed by a very good article in the Winter 2014 LWV SC Voter. See it on the website, www.lwvsc.org. LWVSC supports proposed legislation to give the executive branch more power by consolidating state agencies, giving the governor the power to hire and fire directors of these agencies, and empowering local governments.

Elections and voting are of prime importance to the League. New bills introduced into this session would combine voter registration and elections offices (as is done now in Beaufort and some other counties) and would allow county councils, rather than county legislative delegations, to appoint elections commissioners. We will continue our efforts to improve access to the polls and guarantee that every vote counts.

The "Don't Dump on SC" coalition is one in which LWVSC will continue to be an active member, working to preserve the right of SC counties to determine their own solid waste disposal policies and prevent the dumping of out-of-state wastes here.

Medicaid expansion is another issue for which we have partnered with other organizations in the "Accept ME" coalition which works to encourage the General Assembly to accept federal funds to provide medical care for underserved or un-served residents.

We have been asked to please respond as individuals when our state board asks us to communicate with our legislators on issues important to the League. Letters or phone calls to our representatives will help advance the cause of good government in South Carolina.

Sally McGarry, State Issues/Advocacy Chair



Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2012—2013

BOARD MEETINGS

Future Board meetings will be held on
Thursdays, Feb. 6 and Mar. 6, Apr 3, 2014 at 9:45 A.M.
Location: Coastal States Bank
98 Main Street
Hilton Head Island

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 12, 2014, 10 A.M., Lowcountry Presbyterian Church, Bluffton. League members will make recommendations on current and proposed programs and public policy positions for both the national and local Leagues and will then discuss the League's **State Legislative Agenda**.

March 2, 2014, 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M., the home of Sally McGarry, 6 Angler Pond Ct., Hilton Head Plantation. Members and guests will be enjoying an **End of the Winter Blahs Party**.

March 12, 2014, 10:00 A.M., Lowcountry Presbyterian Church in Bluffton. **Mayor Lisa Sulka** will report on the **State of the Town of Bluffton**.

April 9, 2014, 10:00 A.M., location to be announced. League members will meet to discuss and answer consensus questions on the national League item, **Sustainable Agriculture**.

May 14, 2014, 11:30 A.M., **Annual Meeting and luncheon** at Country Club of Hilton Head. **14th Circuit Court Solicitor "Duffie" Stone** will be the guest speaker.

For more information, please refer to the League's web site at www.lwvhh.org or contact Fran Holt at 837-3436 or franholthhbl@gmail.com.

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