



Lighthouse

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

Democracy for Sale? Part Two

We will continue our discussion of the LWVUS's study on the structures of democracy, which we began in November, at our January 13 meeting. This time our focus will be on Money in Politics as we discuss the extent to which political campaigns are protected speech. Consensus questions and suggestions for background reading will be sent to members before we meet.

We will gather at 10:00 a.m. at the Hilton Head Public Service District on Oak Park Drive on Hilton Head Island. Only League members may participate in the discussion, but guests are welcome to attend.

National President Inspires Members at December Luncheon

The League of Women Voters of the United States President Elisabeth MacNamara delivered a spirited, and inspirational talk entitled "Celebrating Our Past, Embracing the Future" at our holiday luncheon.

According to MacNamara, 2010 was a year that marked the beginning of a "crisis for our democracy" as legislatures around the country passed laws "designed to suppress the vote of identifiable groups of eligible voters. Since 2011, the trend has continued and expanded. From early laws imposing restrictive voter photo ID requirements, proponents of limiting access to the polls moved to proof of citizenship requirements, cutbacks in early voting periods, repeal of same day registration, and attacks on the jewel in the crown of the civil rights era, the Voting Rights Act...In this crisis the League of Women Voters has taken a strong lead in protecting and powering the vote."

The League has been successful in rebuffing recent challenges by providing expertise and financial resources to the states in the thick of the battles and by taking new approaches to engaging voters. The League is registering voters in underserved communities--at high schools, community colleges and naturalization ceremonies--and utilizing on-line resources to provide urgently needed voter information.

Although this is a time of challenge, MacNamara also sees opportunities to engage a multitude of new people in our work. She likened our need to bring in not just more members, but also supporters, to those of League founder Carrie Chapman Catt who considered others in the suffragette movement as part of the League's "reserves." Unlike Catt's League, the League of the 21st century has the ability to engage new supporters with the click of a button.

MacNamara called upon us to embrace the future with a "new mental attitude... just as we have done in our celebrated past...to ensure that the League of Women Voters is a force for change now and forever."

Note: MacNamara's speech in its entirety is available digitally upon request.

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Message from the President



My Proposed New Year's Resolutions for LWVHHI/BA

1. To get to know one another better--There will be an opportunity for that at the End of Winter Blahs Party on Feb. 21 (see Mark Your Calendar).
2. To be more visible to the community
3. To focus on how the League can engage potential members, current members and other supporters in what we do
4. To increase our voter registration efforts, especially for young people

5. To provide as much information for voters as we can
6. To work for voter rights and to get out the vote
7. To continue to develop good communication with our elected and appointed officials
8. To be willing to try new ways of doing things even if we're more comfortable with the old ways
9. To be thankful for all our members even those we rarely see or hear from
10. To welcome diversity of all kinds
11. To understand that people who don't choose to

become League members might still be willing to support us financially and/or join us in advocating for change even if it's only on one issue

12. To encourage qualified citizens, especially women, to run for elected office or apply for appointed positions in government

Please note that many of these resolutions were inspired by the remarks of LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara at our Holiday Luncheon on December 9.

Fran Holt



Seven past presidents and the current president of the local League of Women Voters , with years of service, at the December holiday luncheon. (left to right) Sally McGarry (2001-2005, Barbara Swift (2009-2011, co-president with Ginny Ghirardelli), Vivian Miller (1991-1993), Pat Tousignant (1994-1997), Joan Kinne-Schulman (2005-2009), Loretta Warden (2013-2015), Karen Wilber Wessel (2011-2013), Fran Holt (current president).

Education Committee Report

Our local Education Committee will be meeting on January 11 at 1pm at Kathy Quirk's home in Moss Creek. Throughout the year, committee members have been working to educate ourselves on issues at both the state and local level.

At the state level, we have been particularly following the recommendations coming from the Legislative Task Force assigned to develop a response to the State Supreme Court's finding in Abbeville that the state is not providing a "minimally adequate" education to the children in those rural and impoverished school districts

bringing suit. This may present an opportunity for reform in the state's complicated and controversial funding of education and certainly for advocacy for children who have not been served well by our public schools.

At the local level, we have been monitoring the meetings of the Beaufort County School Board and have expressed concern about the erosion of public trust in the board's functioning and decisions. Their recent town meeting with Hilton Head constituents was a positive move in the direction of improving communication and transparency. We have also

begun planning for a community meeting in the spring on meeting the needs of students in both Beaufort and Jasper counties who are currently being served by ACE. This is in response to discussions about terminating the ACE program.

If you would like to learn more about education in South Carolina and in our local schools, consider joining this committee of high energy League women. To attend the meeting, get in touch with Kathy Quirk at quirk.kathy@gmail.com or 843.836.2892.



LEAGUE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY DAY (LEAD)

Attending LWVSC LEAD is a great way to learn, share information and get to know Leaguers from other areas of our state. This year the program is titled "Looking In to Look Out: the Importance of Community Relations". The focus will be local League and member development as well as the legislative session. Please let me know if you are interested in attending and if you are willing to drive and take a few passengers. The event will be in Columbia from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, January 30. To learn more, please go to the link <http://lwvnet.org/lwv/sc/state/2016LEAD.html>.

Fran Holt
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Visit our Web Site

www.lwvhhi.org

Save This Date: Sunday, February 21, 2016

This is the date of our annual "End of Winter Blahs Party." It is from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the home of Sally McGarry in Hilton Head Plantation. The get together is open to League members, spouses, significant others, and interested friends. It is a good opportunity to socialize and get to know one another better. Attendees bring an appetizer to share. Beverages are provided. (Details to follow in the February Lighthouse.)

Few Women Hold Appointed or Elected Government Offices



A recent article in *The Island Packet* made it clear that women are not well represented on local boards and commissions. Our League urges interested members, especially women, to consider applying to serve on commissions and boards and to encourage other people to do so too. If any of our readers have already responded to a forwarded email from Beaufort County Council member Rick Caporale about an opening on the Children's Foster Care Board, that would be great. Experience gained while working for the League should certainly be good preparation for that and many other positions.

Information about local, county and town boards and commissions; current or upcoming vacancies on them and the application process is available at the following websites.

For Beaufort County

<http://www.bcgov.net/departments/administrative/beaufort-county-council/boards-and-commissions/index.php>

For the Town of Hilton Head Island

<http://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/boards/membershiprequire.cfm>

For the Town of Bluffton

<http://www.townofbluffton.sc.gov/government/Pages/boardvacancies.aspx>

The League also encourages its members to run for elected office and to encourage other people, especially women, to take that important step as well. The terms of quite a lot of current elected officials will be ending soon, and so there is an opportunity to run for office. Information on the election date for each office is available in the League's *Guide to Elected Officials*. An updated version of the *Guide* should soon be available on our website www.lwv.org.

Our League is proud that three of the women currently serving are League members. They are Lisa Sulka, Mayor of the Town of Bluffton; Kim Likins, member of the Hilton Head Island Town Council and Caroline McVitty, member of the Hilton Head Island Planning Commission. Quite a few other current League members (not all women) have served in the past. They include Loretta Warden, past Chair of the Hilton Head Island Planning Commission; Dot Law, Hilton Head Public Service District Commissioner; Bill Evans, Beaufort County School Board Chairman; Flo Rosse, Beaufort County School Board member and Dorothy Perkins, Hilton Head Island Town Council member. If someone has been left out of this list, please accept our apologies.



From left: National League Board member Barbara Zia, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVH-HI/BA President Fran Holt at the December Luncheon.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
HILTON HEAD ISLAND/
BLUFFTON AREA**



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Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2015 - 2016

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held at 10:00 AM at the Palmetto Electric building on Matthews Drive on HHI, unless otherwise noted.

2016: Jan. 7, Feb. 4, Mar. 2, Apr. 7, May 5

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

January 11 - Education Committee Meeting, 1:00 PM at the home of Kathy Quirk. For directions and a pass, call Kathy at 843-836-2892.

January 13 - "Democracy for Sale?" Part II consensus meeting, 10:00 AM, Hilton Head PSD, Oak Park Drive, Hilton Head Island.

January 18 - MLK Memorial March on HHI, 10:00 AM. Gather at the HHI High School parking lot to march with the League. MLK Memorial Program. 11:00 AM, in the HHIHS Seabrook Cultural Center.

In Bluffton, MLK Memorial Service, 12:30 PM, Town Hall.
Memorial Walk, 2:15 PM

January 20 - Natural Resources/Land Use Committee meeting, 2:00 PM, Dunkin Donuts on Hilton Head Island.

January 30 - LEAD Day in Columbia.

February 10 - Membership meeting on National Program Planning, 10:00 AM Hilton Head PSD, Oak Park Drive, Hilton Head Island.

February 20 - SC Republican Party Primary

February 21 - End of Winter Blahs Party, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the home of Sally McGarry.

February 27 - SC Democratic Party Primary

OFFICERS

President:
Fran Holt 843-837-3436
Vice-President, Program Chair:
Nancy Williams 843-681-4212
Treasurer:
Jan Billingslea 843-815-3743
Secretary:
Ellen Dahl 843-785-2115

BOARD

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Education:
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Newsletter:
Joan Kinne-Shulman 843-842-9246
State Issues/Advocacy:
Patricia Montgomery 843-707-1036
Voters Services:
Oleta Harden 843-815-6294
Katie Miller 843-681-6448

Off-Board Positions

Healthcare: Alison Burke
Hospitality: Mary Jo Happle
Observer Corps: Joan Kinne-Shulman
Webmaster: David Rice
Archivist: Connie Voight
Nominating Committee
Chair: Loretta Warden