



Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

The League and the 2010 Census

Our October meeting will take a look at preparations for “Census 2010,” the count of everyone residing in the United States which takes place every ten years. The League of Women Voters of the U.S. has become a Census partner, to help the U.S. Census Bureau achieve as complete and accurate a count as possible. Local Leagues are encouraged to become partners also in their own communities to spread the word about the Census and its importance.

Dr. Paul L. Shepherd is a Census Bureau Partnership Specialist, based in Beaufort. He will speak to us at our membership meeting on Wednesday, October 14, about the status of the local effort to date and about the possibilities for our League to become involved in the process. We will be meeting at the Hilton Head Public Service District building at 21 Oak Park Drive, with the program starting at 10:00 a.m.

The accuracy of the Census count is very important, as the data gathered determine the distribution of more than \$300 billion annually of government funds for critical community services. The results are also used to determine the constitution of U.S. House of Representatives districts and will form the basis for redistricting of South Carolina’s House and Senate districts. As an organization dedicated to “efficient, representative, responsive and accountable state and local government,” the State League’s State and Local Government positions include strict anti-gerrymandering standards for reapportionment following each Census. Once our efforts to help ensure the accuracy and completeness of the Census here are over, we will then be most concerned with monitoring the processes that follow from it.

We look forward to seeing you at the October 14 meeting.

Sally McGarry, Vice President
and Action Chair

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Welcome New Members

September is here and we are looking forward to an exciting fall season. We have been fortunate to have 13 new members join the league for the 2009-2010 season. The new members are **Joan Bryan, Carol Catanzaro, Linda DeLuca, Dorothea Perkins-Hooks, Claudia Kennedy, Reni Kuhn, Bette Lynch, Marion Payne, Pat Wittberger, Ben and Donna Williams, Martha Palatchi and Nancy Schilling.** We also have a new national member, **Margaret Cromwell.**

I would like to take this time to welcome all the new members to the league. I also want to thank all the old members who have chosen to stay with us. In these difficult times the league appreciates everyone who has renewed their memberships and continues to support the league. I look forward to seeing everyone at our meetings and please don't feel shy come and introduce yourself.

Ellen Forwalk, Membership Chairman

From the Presidents



We were reminded last week that the health care debate has become acrimonious. A new organization calling itself the "League of American Voters" is conducting an advertising campaign against health care reform that seeks to mislead the public. In response, the League of Women Voters of the United States sent a letter asking them to stop using a name so similar to ours and building off of our credibility and reputation to undermine public support for health care reform. Their response has not been positive and the LWVUS is considering legal action.

For our part, we wrote our United States Senators and Congressmen stating our position of support for strong health care reform

legislation that includes a quality, affordable public insurance plan.

It is unfortunate that this issue has become partisan and, therefore, we must use good judgment in our advocacy. If you are contacted by the "League of American Voters" please consider using this suggested language in response:

"Thank you for taking the time to write/call/visit the League of Women Voters. We have sent a [letter to the leadership](#) of the League of American Voters and are awaiting a response to this communication. As you know, we have asked the League of American Voters, "to 'cease and desist' from using a name clearly designed to be confused with the League's."



LWVHHI Co-Presidents
Ginny Ghiradeli Barbara Swift

:
For details and more background information, go to the LWVUS web site: www.lwv.org. Click on "Take Action", then "Health Care". As always, the best antidote for misleading statements is the truth. It is important that League members be informed when we have an opportunity to speak up for our democracy amidst all the cacophony.

Rally Day Voter Registration

Dorothea Hooks and Claudia Kennedy went with Donna Williams to Bluffton HS for the LWV voter's registration. We met Valerie Truesdale as soon as we got there and she had an assistant principal help set us up in a hallway where everyone would have to come through to go to the main meeting place. She thanked us several times for coming and said that her administration really appreciated our presence. We also saw several VIPs who came to our table to thank us for coming – principals, Board of Education Chair Fred Washington, member Laura Bush, and we saw

Bob Arundell pass by. We did not collect one registration as everyone said they were registered, but we did collect one change of address. We did give out several applications to personnel new to the area who did not have or know their new identification. They did promise to take applications home and have their spouse fill out a voter registration form with them and mail them back. They may actually mail them as they were pleased that we were there with the applications. We did give out all of the "Guide to Elected Officials" pamphlets as

teachers wanted the information about the upcoming elections, etc. Principals said they told teachers to make certain to register if they were not already registered. All in all, no voters registered, but all three of us felt the presence of the League of Women Voters was greatly appreciated, especially the fact that we came to them.

Donna E. Williams

"SAVE THE DATE:
Dec. 9, 2009.
Holiday lunch with

Ambassador

Linda Tarr-Whelan"

At the Jazz Corner

Action on State Issues

LWVSC is becoming more and more active on a variety of issues and is encouraging local Leagues, members and non-members to become more active too. If LWVSC has your correct e-mail address, you have probably been receiving e-mails alerting you to issues that need action. If you have not received them and would like to, please contact me. You can also read about the action alerts and other items of interest, including a very helpful brochure titled *Advocacy 101, When Citizens Advocate, Democracy Wins* at our state League's website, www.lwvsc.org.

The state League's first tier action priorities for 2009-2011 are education, voter access and tax reform. The second tier priorities are criminal justice, natural resources and reapportionment. The current focus of the education priority is spelled out in *LWVSC's 2009-2010 Legislative Agenda for Public Education*, which was recently adopted by the state Board. It includes issues and actions (reprinted below without all details) as follows:

Issue 1: All children in South Carolina need and deserve the opportunity for a high quality education that will prepare them to be productive workers and thoughtful citizens.

Action: SC General Assembly enacts legislation to submit a referendum to the voters at the next general election, amending

the South Carolina constitution to state: "South Carolina will provide a high quality education, allowing every student the opportunity to reach his or her highest potential."

Issue 2: The level and distribution of funding resources should ensure that schools have what they need to provide a high quality education.

Action: SC General Assembly enacts legislation to comprehensively reform the funding formula established by the Education Finance Act.

Action: SC General Assembly enacts legislation to fully fund early childhood services, including instructional, for children who are at risk of not being prepared to enter 5K due to disabilities, development delays, and/or poverty. When state finances allow, fully fund services to children ages birth to kindergarten (5K) who are at risk.

Action: The SC General Assembly continues to oppose proposals to use public funds for vouchers or tax credits to support private school education.

Issue 3: South Carolina tax and budgetary policy should assure that funding for public schools is stable, adequate and equitable.

Action: The SC General Assembly enacts legislation to correct the most serious problems caused by Act 388. [Act 388 of 2006 provides full relief from property tax for school operations to

owner-occupied residential property in exchange for an extra 1% sales tax. It also prevents school districts and local governments from raising millage rates by more than a formula based on inflation and population growth and caps increases in the assessed value of property at 15% every five years.]

Action: The General Assembly creates an independent, permanent tax commission with adequate staff and a broad mandate to study and recommend tax policies that ensure an adequate, equitable and efficient state and local revenue structure.

At the September general membership meeting, Senator Tom Davis indicated that dealing with the problems caused by Act 388 will be very important at the upcoming legislative session.

It will not be easy to make the needed changes, because, unlike Beaufort County, most school districts have benefited from the act. Stay tuned to see what happens and how we might help.

Fran Holt, State Issues Action Chair
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September Program Well-Attended

State Senator Tom Davis, the speaker at our first membership meeting of the new program year,

the middle of the State Ethics Committee's review of Sanford's actions and must await the results.

the port, he detailed all that has been accomplished so far as a result of bringing together the Governors of South Carolina and Georgia to reach agreement. What must be accomplished in this next session of the two state legislatures is passage of identical compacts, which would then be sent to Congress for ratification, to serve as a "treaty" between our two states. Sen. Davis pointed out that this modern, state of the art Port would broaden the economic base of our region, providing jobs even for S.C.'s "Corridor of Shame."



State Senator Tom Davis

brought out a sizable crowd of both members and visitors. All the seats were filled in the Hilton Head Public Service District's Community Room.

The Senator began his presentation by referring to "the elephant in the room," Governor Mark

Once the results are known, the matter must be resolved quickly and put behind us in order for the legislators to be able to act on the important issues before our state.

The three important issues he talked about were (1) development of

Clearing up the inequities and internal inconsistencies in the state laws governing taxation and education funding is essential if Beaufort County is to receive fair treatment. Sen. Davis sees the possibility that, if legislators cannot be convinced by rational argument, Senators in the coastal counties could join together to block bills important to Senators in other parts of the state in exchange for equitable funding for our students.

The Senator's talk was followed by a question and answer period which brought out several other interesting issues. He spoke well in answering them. And, in addition, several of the guests in the room became League members.



Fran Holt and Senator Davis

Sanford. He and the Governor have been friends for 30 years and he has believed in him. He pointed out that we are in

the Jasper Port, (2) education funding reform, and (3) protection of our remarkable estuarine environment. With regard to

Sally McGarry

United States Census Information

The League of Women Voters has taken on the 2010 Census as a central project for the upcoming year. Leagues across the country have begun establishing partnerships with their local census offices to ensure every resident is counted. Nationally, we have officially partnered with the Census Bureau and joined the national *Ya Es Hora, Hagase Contar!* ("It is Time, Make Yourself Count!") Campaign along with NALEO, Television, SEIU, and others.

General Description of the U.S. Census:

Article I, Section 2, of the U.S. Constitution mandates a headcount of everyone residing in the United States. The first Census was conducted in 1790 and has been carried out every 10 years since then.

The 2010 Census will be mailed to all households in March, consisting of a short-form, **with 10 questions** that will take **10 minutes** to complete. The census will count all residents living in the United States as well as ask for name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, relationship and housing tenure – taking just minutes to complete.

Census data is important because it:

- impacts how more than \$300 billion per year in federal and state funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and more.

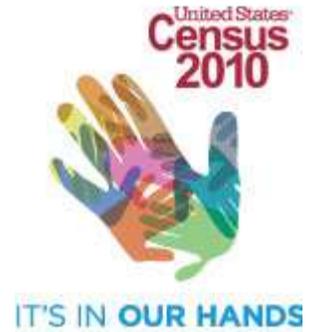
- determines how data is also used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and to redistrict state legislatures and;

- determines how Census data are used to define legislature districts, school district assignment areas and other important functional areas of government.

The census is like a snapshot that helps define who we are as a nation. Data about changes in your community are crucial to many planning decisions, such as where to provide services for the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, or where to locate job training centers.

Let's work together to make it happen right!!

For more information, please contact Zaida Arguedas (ZArguedas@lww.org) and Sergio España (SEspana@lww.org)





League of Woman Voters of
 Hilton Head Island
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 Hilton Head Island,
 South Carolina
 29925

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

OCTOBER
 Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2009—2010

Board Meetings

Thursday, October 1, 9:45 am at Harbourside Bank,
 852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

Thursday, November 5, 9:45 am at Harbourside
 Bank, 852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

Membership Meeting

Wednesday, October 14, 10:00 am at HILTON
 HEAD PSD, 21 Oak Park Drive. Speaker Paul
 Shepherd, PhD

OFFICERS

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 Sally McGarry 342-9254
 Treasurer: Janet Law 671-4280
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 Anita Holcslaw 686-4085
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BOARD

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 Joan Kinne-Shulman 842-9246
 Hospitality: Linda DeLuca 681-4969
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