



# Lighthouse

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

## Sommerville to Address League at October Meeting

Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council Chairman, will be the featured speaker at our League's October 14 meeting. His topic is The State of Beaufort County. A question and answer session will follow his presentation.

The meeting will be held in the Hilton Head Public Service District's community room at 10:00 a.m. The PSD is located at 21 Oak Park Drive.

The public is welcome.

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## REPORT ON THE SEPTEMBER 23 MEETING: A HEALTHCARE CONVERSATION

As part of the information gathering process for the LWVSC study on healthcare in South Carolina, LWVHHI/BA put together a panel of area health providers to discuss their services and needs. Nancy Finch, RN, PhD, served as moderator. She is a senior hospital administrator at the Medical University of SC and a Clinical Assistant Professor at the College of Nursing at MUSC. Nancy is also a League member in Charleston. Assisting her was David Ball, RN, a State League Board member and the coordinator of the healthcare study. Panel participants were: Alison Burke, an attorney and the healthcare specialist for the local League, who shared her perspective on the needs of disabled patients in the healthcare system. Florry Gibbes is a Medical Speech-Language Pathologist who currently works for Amedisys Home Health. Omega Smalls-Francis is the area director of the Hilton head Office of the Coastal Empire Community Medical Health Center, a division of the SC Department of Mental Health, Tom Neal, RN, is the Chief Operating Officer at the Hilton Head Hospital. Ronald Smith, MD, a retired anesthesiologist, is currently the Medical Director of Bluffton -Jasper Volunteers in Medicine.

Each panel member described how he or she manages to serve clients even with limited resources. One of their many concerns was the difficulty clients have in keeping appointments or getting to the facility for care. Transportation is a major problem. Although the services have a sliding scale of fees, many clients cannot afford even a minimal cost. Many also cannot pay for referral care or medications. (Kroger and Publix offer some medications at no charge with a prescription. Walmart offers some medications at a low cost.) Thus their illnesses often become worse. Some clients have insurance, but it often does not cover the costs of many needed procedures. A large number of individuals aged 19 to 64 do not have medical insurance. Some 170,000 people in SC do not qualify for insurance under the Affordable Care Act. All of the agencies do their best to provide care to everyone who needs it.

Communication with related organizations is often difficult because of different systems used by each and because of regulations protecting privacy rights.

The Medical Health Center initiated innovative ways to better serve its clients, especially those who are in the workforce. The agency is open early and late, and it uses staff members who speak a second language to remind clients of appointments and to follow-up on missed appointments.

*Continued on page 4.*

## Message from the President



The need to keep doing what we can to encourage citizens to register to vote, to exercise their right to vote and to become informed voters struck me as more important than ever when I recently worked at the polls in the Pritchardville Precinct (the only precinct in Southern Beaufort County that includes any of SC Senate District 45) for the Democratic primary for the special election to fill the seat sadly vacated by the death of Senator Clementa Pinckney. The turnout was dismal. I think we had 36 voters all day. Hopefully, more voters will show up for the election on October 20 and the Town of Bluffton election on November 3.

Fortunately, our League is committed to working hard on voter service. **Katie Miller**, Voter Service CoChair, along with the volunteers she recruited, has been conducting several registration drives. See page 3.

There will be more drives in 2016, because there are obviously some important elections coming up including a Republican Presidential Primary on February 20 and a Democratic Presidential Primary on February 27. In addition to conducting voter

registration drives, we provide voter registration information on our website, [www.lwvhhi.org](http://www.lwvhhi.org).

**Oleta Harden**, Voter Service CoChair, and I are currently organizing a candidates forum in the Town of Bluffton for the November 3 election for mayor and two seats on Town Council. See article on page 2. This forum should help inform voters about the issues and the candidates' views on those issues. Please note that only residents of the Town of Bluffton are eligible to vote in that election. Having a Bluffton address does not necessarily mean residency within the town limits. To find out if your address is in the Town, call the Beaufort County Board of Voter Registration and Elections at 843-255-6900 (main office) or 843-255-6940 (Bluffton office).

**Sue Feutz**, former local Voter Service Chair, is sharing her talents, knowledge and energy with the state League for whom she is now Vice President for Voter Services and Citizen Education. Despite her new ties to Columbia, she's still helping us here. Recently she spoke about voter service and vot-

ing rights to the Liberal Men of the Low Country. She has indicated that she would be pleased to speak to other interested groups regardless of their political leanings.

Thank you to everyone involved in providing voter service and in advocating for voter rights, which are both essential components to the League's mission.

A completely different recent focus of our League has been concern about nepotism and associated issues such as trust, board responsibility and transparency as they relate to the Beaufort County Schools District. Hopefully, the issues will have been satisfactorily resolved by the time readers receive this newsletter. As I write this on September 20, I can only say that we are informing ourselves about the situation and have conveyed our concern to the chairman and members of the Board of Education.

Fran Holt

### LWVHHI/BA to Host Bluffton Mayoral and Council Candidate Forum

The Town of Bluffton's candidates for Mayor and Town Council will participate in a League sponsored forum on October 7 at the Bluffton Town Hall from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM. The two candidates for Mayor have accepted our invitation to participate in the forum. They are: incumbent Lisa Sulka and challenger Cynthia Bensch.

There are eight candidates for two seats on the Town Council. They are: Oliver Brown, Brendon Downey, incumbent Ted Huffman, Harry Lutz, Eleanor Mckinsey-Chandler, Jim Sims, Michael Spears, and Dan Wood. All of the candidates for the Council seats have agreed to participate in the forum.

The event is open to the general public as well as League members and friends.

## Voter Services Activities

September was an active month for the Voter Services Team. On Constitution Day (Sept. 17) we held a registration drive at Hilton Head High School at the request of Social Studies chair Duncan Aspinwall-Winter. Sally McGarry, George Kanuck, and Katie Miller enrolled more than 25 students during the Cafeteria lunch hours. Many thanks to Mr. A-T for his help and support and to the enthusiastic students who are now registered voters.

On September 22, the League marked National Voter Registration Day with a drive at the Bluffton Public Library, held for the convenience of people on their lunch hours as well as on their way home from work. Thanks to Team members Karen Arms, Pat Cano, Barbara deNeeve, and Sue Feitz for working the two shifts and to the library for its always generous support.

Saturday, Sept. 26 brought the opening of the Squire Pope Community Park Rowing and Sailing Center. We joined NIBCAA and the Native Island POA, establishing a voter registration table and sharing the afternoon with the community picnic. Pat and Ken Goodman, Anita Holcslaw, and Pat Cano were our able enrollers.

As always, we are looking for volunteers to help us reach as many eligible voters as possible before the Bluffton Township election in November. If you can help the League for 1 or 2 hours early or late in the day, please contact Oleta Harden (843-815-6294) [ojharden@hargray.com](mailto:ojharden@hargray.com) or Katie Miller (843-681-6448) [katiem-lrrhh@hargray.com](mailto:katiem-lrrhh@hargray.com). We will arrange the schedule to meet your needs and will appreciate any time you can spend.

Thanks in advance for your help.

**WE NEED YOU!**



**Visit our Web Site**

**[www.lwvghi.org](http://www.lwvghi.org)**

## September Meeting Report - continued



More should be done to help people with mental health issues—the local hospital does not offer psychiatric services. Health benefits should not be cut off for disabled individuals when they join the workforce. Providing information about health services and healthful living to non-English speakers, the deaf, blind, and illiterate is a challenge. Pediatric services in the local area are limited. The Hilton Head Hospital does not offer them because the population is too small to make it cost effective. VIM does not give services to individuals under 18 because children have access to government health programs. Undocumented individuals often do not use even free health services because they fear being reported to immigration authorities. The consensus among the panelists was that healthcare is a human right, and the state should uphold that right by providing at least a minimal level of services. Keeping people healthy saves money in the long run because they can work and thus pay taxes and use fewer government funded services.

### Beaufort County Community Relations Council

The second organizational meeting of the Beaufort County Community Relations Council took place at the Technical College of the Lowcountry on September 17th with 18 people present. At the first meeting, Council leaders were selected and a training session was held to explain the mission and the process for proceeding. Beaufort County is now the 17th county established in the state; this follows resolution approval in November, 2014, by the County Council of Beaufort County.

Guiding Principles for the Council were reviewed, discussed, and accepted. They included: Shared Vision, Diversity, Inclusiveness, Asset Based Community Development, Committed to Non-Violence (based on The King Center's Pledge of Nonviolence in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.), Collaboration, Committed to Evidence-based or Best Practices, An Efficient and Effective Use of Existing Resources, and Doing "Whatever it Takes." Of particular interest was whether the Council is to be a problem solver. Accepted was an understanding that the Council would be a communicator and connector between those with concerns and those established to respond.

The membership of the Council and who should intentionally be included is a continuing concern. A next step will be development of by-laws. New training sessions will be coming; for example, later on this day a workshop on security and workplace violence was to be held at USCB.

On-going meetings are scheduled for the 3rd Thursdays of the month. Location is intended to be center-county, and an email survey will be taken to determine the preferred time.

Representing the HH/Bluffton LWW for Loretta Warden,

Karen Arms

## Introducing Ellie Dixon

From the “Northeast Kingdom” of Vermont to the Lowcountry of South Carolina, the League of Women Voters seems to have a presence in my life. My husband (from New York) and I (from Portland, Maine), after meeting at the University of Colorado in Boulder, settled in Vermont in 1965. There we began raising our family and starting our careers, he as a political scientist and me in the newspaper world. Only a few years later, with a state election under way, a friend suggested she and I start a League of Women Voter’s group. We did and as we researched issues, we found ourselves becoming more informed and simultaneously meeting new friends.

I soon began my career in our new environment as a part-time reporter. Not long after that, I joined the staff as full-time reporter. I later became city editor and then Managing Editor, retiring in 2006 and moving to Sun City Hilton Head in the summer of that year.

When we moved to the Lowcountry, I wanted to keep my interest in writing and began freelancing for the Island Packet. While my strength had been in the “hard” news of the day, the Packet needed help with feature stories – a whole new ballgame for me but a wonderful way to get to know the area. I later began writing regularly for our community’s magazine, SunSations and became very active in the Sun City community. At the same time, my husband and I began volunteering at the Bluffton Children’s Center (no longer in Bluffton) and we did that regularly for about five years until the center closed.

Only a year ago, I learned that some of my Sun City friends were active members of the Hilton Head/Bluffton LWV and when it was suggested that I join, it didn’t take much for me to agree.

**Editor’s Note** - *This profile is the first in a series to acquaint members with new Board members.*



**Healthcare Panel, September 23**

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



[www.LWVHHI.org](http://www.LWVHHI.org)

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Monthly  
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2015 - 2016

**BOARD MEETINGS**

Board meetings will be held at 10:00 AM on Oct. 1, Nov. 5 (at Palmetto Electric on Mathews Drive in Hilton Head), and Dec. 3 (place to be determined).

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

- October 7** - 7:00 PM Bluffton Town Hall Forum for candidates for Bluffton Mayor and Town Council
- October 12** - 10:00 AM Education Committee meeting at the home of Kathy Quirk. For directions and pass, call 843-836-2892. .
- October 14** - Membership meeting featuring Beaufort County Council Chairman Paul Sommerville on "The State of Beaufort County." 10:00 AM at the Hilton Head Island PSD, Oak Park Drive.
- November 3** - Election Day
- November 4** - 2:00 PM Natural Resources/Land Use Committee meeting at Dunkin Donuts in Hilton Head.
- November 18** - "Democracy for Sale" at Bluffton Library at 10:00 AM.
- December 9** - Holiday Luncheon, 11:30 AM at the Country Club of Hilton Head in Hilton Head Plantation.

**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**

Communications:  
Sandy Stern 843-342-4834

Education:  
Kathy Quirk 843-836-2892

Membership:  
Ellie Dixon 843-705-3973  
Diane Neal 843-757-0622

Natural Resources/Land Use:  
Sally McGarry 843-342-9254

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: Allison Burke

Hospitality: Mary Jo Happle

Observer Corps: Joan Kinne-Shulman

Webmaster: David Rice

Archivist: Connie Voight

Nominating Committee  
Chair: Loretta Warden