

REPORTS FROM LOCAL LEAGUES AND MAL UNITS

LWV of the CHARLESTON AREA – Mary Horres

The past two years have been very event-filled ones for our League. Here are some highlights: Voters Service has always been a priority for our League, and many League members contributed to these outstanding accomplishments in 2009-2011:

Partnered with the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce to hold eleven candidate forums. Launched our largest-ever voter registration drive—Counting on You: Vote 2010!—with over 20 other local organizations and, for the first time, with all materials for a do-it-yourself voter registration drive available at our website.

Registered close to 1000 students to vote in five Berkeley high schools, in addition to hundreds of citizens at numerous other voter registration drives. Plans are underway for teams to register students at all high schools in the tri-county area.

Provided extensive information on candidates for the 2010 elections with VOTE411 software and many hours of effort by our web technology team.

A yearlong study of SC drug laws and policies culminated in the March 2010 release of its final report, Mapping the Elephant: Illegal Drugs in South Carolina. The study's positions on illegal drugs were adopted at our May 2010 Annual Meeting. These positions will be under consideration for adoption by concurrence at the LWVSC Biennial Convention. Copies of the report and a summary report are available on our website.

A study of green schools was completed, and positions from this study were also adopted at the May 2010 Annual Meeting.

In addition to the outstanding work on our study of SC illegal drug laws and policies and completion of the green schools study, the League held a number of meetings in the past two years to inform our members and the public on a range of public policy issues. These included:

- “Health Care Reform: What’s Next?” with speakers from the South Carolina Hospital Association and the South Carolina AARP.
- “Criminality of Drug Use” with a panel including the police chiefs of Charleston and North Charleston, a retired police chief representing Law Enforcement Against Prohibition, and a minister who is a reformed addict.
- Presentation at the SeeWee Center on “The Effects of Climate Change on Our Local Wildlife Refuges” with the Project Leader of the SC Lowcountry Refuge Complex and the Refuge Manager at Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge.
- Membership meeting to discuss the findings of our League’s study report on illegal drugs in South Carolina.
- Women’s Equality Day Dinner with Inez Tenenbaum, who spoke on “A Time to Lead: Inspiring Women to Pursue Public Service.”
- Public forum on the recommendations of the SC Legislature’s Tax Realignment Commission, presented by Burnie Maybank, the Commission’s chairman.
- Public forum on Water Issues in Charleston-Area Waters with speakers from Charleston Harbor Pilots, Charleston Waterkeeper, and Coastal Conservation League.
- “Getting the Best Teachers in our Classrooms: A Conversation on Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness,” a panel discussion with local and national education leaders.

- League members spent many hours communicating with legislators and others on issues such as public school funding, voter photo ID, increase in the cigarette tax, and clean energy. Some specific efforts were these:
- Meeting with Senator McConnell and 8 LWVCA members in October 2009 to discuss priorities for the upcoming legislative session.
- Meeting with Dr. Nancy McGinley to discuss “Future Vision 2010-2015,” her plan to guide the next phase of construction for the Charleston County school district.
- A January 2010 meeting in Columbia with Brad Wright, Chief Counsel for SC House Speaker Bobby Harrell, on issues before the legislature.
- Participation with the LWVSC and other local Leagues in a two-year-long judicial project to advocate for a more independent, diverse judiciary.
- Publication in The Post and Courier of an op-ed, letter to the editor, and interview with the President on the issues of criminality of drug use, need for pay equity, and under-representation of women in the political process.
- Publication of a letter in The Moultrie News opposing the voter photo ID bill.

Our League’s website continues to be a one-stop source of information for voters as well as our members—with everything from candidate and elections information to the complete study report on illegal drugs. In the past two years we ceased publication of our printed newsletter Voters’ Voice and moved to email to communicate with members and others interested in league activities. In addition to the website, we have three other ways for members to stay informed and to respond easily to issues:

Facebook—Become a fan of our League!

Constant Contact for email

The League’s Latest—Our blog that we link to email for expanded articles and photos

For 2011-2012, we are establishing a Communications Committee to engage members and increase community awareness of the LWVCA and its work.

In 2010 we began a two-year Membership Recruitment Initiative and made concerted efforts throughout the year to invite others to join the league, to welcome new members, and to communicate league activities and opportunities to get involved. We were successful in recruiting new members to replace those who left our league, but we have not reached our goal of a significant net gain in membership. For 2011-2012, we are increasing the size and budget for the committee so that we can expand our efforts to recruit and retain members and reach our goal of a 10% net gain in membership.

This report would be incomplete without mention of our celebration of the 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters and ratification of the 19th amendment. Over seven months of planning by a committee led by Heather Osterfeld, our Resource Development Director, resulted in a splendid Women’s Equality Day dinner on August 26, 2010, for 175 league members and guests. The LWVCA honored eight Elected Women of Distinction, and Inez Tenenbaum was the keynote speaker. The anniversary celebration also provided great publicity for the Charleston Area league with ads in the local newspapers, print and television news coverage, an op-ed titled “Celebrate 19th Amendment and League of Women Voters,” and a follow-up interview with the LWVCA president.

LWV of the CLEMSON AREA – Linda Gahan
--

The League of Women Voters of the Clemson Area adopted the theme, “Let’s Celebrate What Is Great about LWVCA” and began the 2010-2011 year with a celebration of Women’s Equality Day and 90 years since the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote. We continued exploring our heritage of women’s voting rights by showing the movie “Iron Jawed

Angels” and attending Clemson University Professor Megan Shockley’s U.S. Women’s History Class where long time League member, Keller Barron talked about her role in the Equal Rights Amendment. LWVCA, Strom Thurmond Institute, and Clemson University President’s Commission on the Status of Women co-sponsored a forum “Women and Politics: A Place at the Table” featuring Glenda Cobb-Hunter. Women should run for political office to best affect governmental policy.

Voter Service activities, concentrating in three counties, focused on registering voters at Walmart, libraries, and high schools and holding 5 candidate forums. We partnered with WYFF4 and LWVSC to sponsor a televised Congressional debate, combined efforts with the Clemson University Republicans and Democrats and the Strom Thurmond Institute in a second congressional debate, and joined another political student group at Tri County Tech for a SC House debate. Our forums included candidates running for US Congress, the SC House, County Council and Pickens County School Board. Leaguers volunteered in many ways to make these forums successful. After the November General Election, an election party highlighted “What Happened Last Tuesday” with comments by Bruce Ransom, a league member and a member of the CU Political Science faculty.

Membership recruitment was one of our goals. Led by membership chair Paula Appling, LWVCA held a membership kickoff event in August and gained 14 new members. Throughout the year, new recruits were invited to attend encouraged to participate in league activities, meetings, workshops and volunteer opportunities.

Fundraising was another essential LWVCA goal. Various members headed efforts to solicit donations in honor of the Nineteenth Amendment, to hold a sale at the Pickens County Flea Market, and to offer a raffle at the annual meeting. Excellent organization and leadership from Dianne Haselton and her team made the Wine Tasting FUNdraiser the top success of this year. Now with our treasury replenished, we can fund additional activities in support of leadership development and advocacy. We are having fun!

The third goal for the year highlighted the league’s visibility in the community. Reggie Turetzky led this effort to give us excellent newspaper and local bulletin coverage. The VOTER was redesigned with an attractive and readable layout and photos of league activities. The website was given a new URL that is easy to remember and Eleanor Hare updates it with current information, publications, photos, announcement of programs, activities and events, action and study items, elected officials, etc. The Directory of Public Officials has been updated for the three counties and generously printed by Duke Energy.

Our league programs addressed many league issues with eye-catching titles. “Whose Schools Are They?” “SC vs. NC: Go with the Flow”, “Under the Cover of Darkness: Transparency in Government”, “You and the Affordable Health Care Act”, “A More Diverse and Independent Judiciary” and “SC Energy Future”. We tackled state program planning including two concurrences. Participation and interest in these topics were favorable.

Recycling was the Hot Topic for the year. Informational luncheons with presentations on the county wide recycling programs were held in Anderson, Pickens, and Oconee Counties. A Go-See Tour of the Pickens County Solid Waste Recycling Center increased our awareness of what can be recycled and reused, where our waste goes and where recycled glass, plastic and paper are sold, as well as what revenues are realized for municipal and county governments from the sale of these recyclables.

Several workshops and meetings held throughout the state enhanced the education and leadership development of some of our members. These include League Leaders’ Day, the Basics of Advocating with Legislators, the Redistricting Forum in Greenville, Legislative Advocacy Day and the Launching of the LWVSC Project, “Safeguarding Democracy: A Quest for a More Diverse and

Independent Judiciary. With our new skills on advocacy, we were able to take action on various issues such as adequate funding of public education, recycling, Voter Photo ID, redistricting and the Clean Air Act. Members are encouraged to develop a relationship with legislators and communicate the facts on the issues. Empowered by study and trained in advocacy, LWVCA works to safeguard democracy that leads to tangible civic improvement.

LWV of the COLUMBIA AREA – Pamela Craig

The Columbia Area League had made history by establishing a Co-Presidency, which worked well, but the partnership came to an end in 2009. Suzanne withdrew from the joint venture, and redirected her attention to State board activities as an off-board specialist in nuclear waste, and as editor for the Columbia Area League Lines.

I know that if you read old issues of any of League's newsletters whether it be League Lines of Columbia, Voters' Voice of Charleston, The Lighthouse of Hilton Head, etc, you will see the League is continually out in front of everyone else. I say that, because, in January 2009, we had the then Rep. Nikki Haley to speak at our luncheon. At that time, we supported her House bill on accountability and transparency. In fact, she submitted her own article to our League Lines. And, now she's Governor.

We established an Environmental Affairs committee chaired by Opal Brown and Chester Sansbury, but I must mention Andy Yasinac. If you have taken part in an environmental event, you probably recognize their names. These committee chairs have been in the forefront strengthening our coalitions with other environmental groups because our strength is in numbers, and in addressing issues that directly affect us all such as Richland County Stormwater Control Ordinance and more recently the sewage spills into the Broad and Saluda Rivers.

In the previous years, Keller Barron picked up the banner for the Columbia League and worked on the immigration consensus. Again, the League was out front, because two years later Carole Cato and JoAnne Day, both Columbia Area members on the State Board, have attended hearings concerning immigration bills before the legislature. They are also addressing the issue of Voter Photo ID. Both of these particular issues have yet to be resolved and continually chip away at the liberties of all.

We also started something that I think the Columbia League will continue to make part of their program. We scheduled field trips. The League visited a recycling plant and a water treatment facility. It is extended education, and allowed us to see the work involved in reducing trash and keeping our drinking water safe. Visits to a sewage treatment plant and state legislators are possibilities for the upcoming year.

One item, done under the State auspices but coordinated by Columbia League's First Vice President, Carole Cato, was the recognition of the 90th Anniversary of Women's Equality Day at the State House. We partnered with the Southeastern Institute for Women in Politics and other organizations to recognize how far we have come and how far we still have to go. Let this be an opened "Thank You" to Representative Joan Brady for her assistance in making the day a success.

In conjunction with that, I would like to remind everyone that the Anita Hill Party scheduled for Thursday, October 21, 2011 will have Anita Hill as the guest of honor. Be sure to put the date on your calendar.

I mentioned the 90th Anniversary of Women's Equality Day. We also celebrated the 90th birthday of the League, Sarah Leverette and Jean Slider. We did that by having a member social at the

Woodhill Country Club, thank you Carol Medich. Events like these make me truly appreciate the League. We gathered together accomplishing tasks while at the same time expanding our friendships.

I would be remised not to mention some of our newer members who have picked up the banner and have done wonders for the League. This list is never complete and apologies are made, in advance, to all those who have worked hard to make the Columbia Area

League what it is but their names were not mentioned. Teri Evans reorganized our website and did a terrific job. She also did a terrific job as part of the commentary team for WISTV on election night. Karen Utter took on the job of the Columbia League's judicial diversity project and jumped on it "like a duck on a June bug". Karen, at the time of this writing, has a family emergency and we wish her well and want to remind her to call on her League family should she need assistance. Then there is Janelle Rivers who was selected to serve as one of the six area chairs for the Public Education Study Committee of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

I know that the next time this article has to be written, I will not be the author. I have served as Co-President and President for six years. I joined the League because I thought I was alone in South Carolina. I had come here from New York City where my views were always the majority. When I arrived in South Carolina, for the first time, it was not my race that made me a minority. The League has been a lifeline to me. I want to take this time to thank all the members of the League for making me see that I was not alone.

LWV of DARLINGTON COUNTY – Joyce Franklin

Monthly meetings:

April 21, 2009 – Two delegate members reported on the Greenville Convention.

May 19, 2009 – Annual meeting business included budget and fundraising approval, officer and board member election, a proposal to hold a program planning meeting the next month, and a discussion of plans for voter registration drives and machine demos, with an annual auction fundraiser and buffet held that included an adult guest and her granddaughter.

September 15, 2009 – Guest speaker was the county Election Commission Director who reported on previous citizen voting records. Questions were raised about a possible census increase's effect on voting. Voter service activities were announced.

October 20, 2009 – Retired political science Francis Marion University professor Dr. Neil Thigpen addressed our members with a stimulating analysis of political realities answering questions in addition.

November 17, 2009 – Sheriff Wayne Byrd served as program speaker opening with a Biblical quote his mother recommended for his guidance, then spoke of his office's accomplishments and goals. Closing with responses to the audience's questions about gang activities, he identified their locations and measures being used to counteract their presence and influence.

January 19, 2010 – Coker College professor Mal Hyman spoke about environmental concerns, such as global warming. Referencing a number of resources, he circulated a list of major big energy provider board members who are in conflicting positions of influence. All present were energized to become more aware of our human usage patterns and their impact on future generations.

February 16, 2010 – Belinda Copeland presented a district tax personal calculation chart which necessitated an individual's assessed property value to use. State concern was apparent over the loss of sales tax revenue for education, which is an unreliable income source, and pending bills that produce an unfair school funding base. Our local will participate as a census partner this year.

March 16, 2010 – Wesley Blackwell, past County Council Chair, spoke of issues he regarded as central to the county's wellbeing: developing an economic public and private partnership, accomplished by city and county collaboration; but, although major industries contribute

substantially to revenues, budgetary concerns have multiplied; natural resources, such as an expected water shortage and waste disposal, and abandoned trailer recycling are other areas needing attention.

April 20, 2010 – Member Pattie White introduced her husband David, a local farmer and Frances Marion University political science professor, who raises organic chickens on the county family's farm. Processing is in a family owned USDA plant in an adjacent county.

May 18, 2010 – The annual meeting auction and buffet with seven guests included a program review and appropriate orientation comments for member recruitment.

September 21, 2010 – State trained membership committee co-chairs Sharman Poplova and Charlotte Grooms each reported on possible goals for our local and shared their training experience. A member reported on the state League Leaders Day, while two members will publicize Women's Equality Day. The local's stationery letterhead, brochure, and possible website information were shared.

October 19, 2010 – The state League promotion of a Diverse Judiciary, a "Smack Down the Vote" tee shirt investment, and a joint Florence League January program were discussed with local delegation representatives present to review the 2011 legislative agenda. Our presence at the Hartsville Market Place to promote the organization and sell tee shirts, etc. was approved. The concept of portfolio and action teams was also explained.

November 16, 2010 – Lavell Moses, Director of Community United, was the evening's program to address local intervention strategies for area youth and their families so as to avoid becoming referred to the solicitor's office as juvenile justice cases.

January 13, 2011 – The joint Florence and Darlington county Leagues welcomed Senator Gerald Malloy who entertained and addressed upcoming legislative issues fielding questions from the 26 present. An opportunity to meet in joint discussion groups was provided at the closing.

February 15, 2011 – An opening recognition was given to the League's 91st birthday before LWVSC positions for 2011-2013's program were reviewed. Decisions were made to retain all positions with the only comments given on education being that districts needed to be consolidated; no new study was recommended.

March 21, 2011 – The Judiciary Selection program was held at Darlington's Mayo High School for Math and Science. A powerpoint presentation by President Joyce Franklin explained the key concerns of current state practices and recommended changes that would address inequalities.

April 19, 2011 – Business "catch-up" and preparation for the upcoming annual meeting May 17 occupied member planning.

LWV of the FLORENCE AREA – Sara B. Stewart

The LWVF opened the 2010 – 2011 season in August with a celebration of Hattie Lowery, one of the founding members of our League. Guests included Rep. Terry Alexander, a longtime friend of Mrs. Lowery, and it was well covered by the newspaper and local television station.

We scheduled our candidates' forum in September, in order to ensure that the candidates' schedules would be open, and contacted them well in advance. Unfortunately, none of the incumbents attended, so the event had to be cancelled.

In October, we met with Florence Dist. One Schools Superintendent Allie Brooks, who reported on the proposed construction of several new schools, how the school funding formula affects us, and the strong likelihood of layoffs and drastic changes to the school day after Federal stimulus money runs out in May.

Our Judicial Diversity and Independence forum was held in late November at Frances Marion University. The Florence Morning News gave excellent coverage of the upcoming event, including

giving prominent Sunday placement to an Op-Ed piece by our chapter president. The paper's editor attended and wrote his own editorial about the issue following the event. Our panelists were Judge Terry Wooten, Hon. Terry Alexander, and LWV-SC's own Constance Anastopoulo, who kindly gave up her afternoon and evening to drive to Florence for our event. Audience comments were very favorable.

The Darlington and Florence chapters held a combined meeting at Florence-Darlington Technical College in January.

Senator Gerald Malloy spoke and took questions on the subject of effective citizen advocacy.

In February, we held our 90th Anniversary tea at the home of Belva High, with members encouraged to dress in period clothing for the event. All enjoyed good food and great conversation.

For the past several years, we have celebrated March as Women's History month by hosting Movie Night at the Florence County Library. This year, we screened Standing on my Sisters' Shoulders, an award-winning documentary about the Mississippi women who led the fight for civil rights in during the turbulent '50's and '60's.

We finished our year in April with a luncheon and presentation by Janice Baroody, Executive Director of the Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority, which was named Best Urban Transit Provider of the Year by SC-DOT in 2010. She discussed how PDRTA is meeting the challenge of providing public transportation to our large, and largely rural, region.

Throughout the year, the new editor of the Florence Morning News, Tucker Marshall, has cooperated with our chapter in announcing upcoming events and publishing our president's letters on issues of concern.

LWV of GEORGETOWN COUNTY – Dwight Fee

The Georgetown League membership meetings have featured programs related to Education: County School District, First Steps, and Marine Institute; Natural Resources: Recycling, several joint luncheon meetings with Sierra Club. The most popular programs were Holley Ulbrich speaking with us about tax reform and our Program Planning meetings.

We sponsored a rally celebrating the anniversary of Women's Suffrage, gathering in downtown Georgetown with City, County and State officials in attendance.

We co-sponsored with Charleston LWV and others a Congressional District Candidate Forum. We returned to sponsoring a well-received School Board Candidate Forum.

Responding in part to smaller membership and to LWVUS initiative, the Board is about to be restructured, downsized to four officers and two Board members. We are struggling with finding the best way to communicate with our members, given choices of e-mail, web site or newsletter. We need younger members, but we do have motivated older members, who do not want to be bystanders to the politics of their own country! We plan to focus on membership and advocacy and to benefit from their interrelatedness in the coming two years.

LWV of HILTON HEAD ISLAND - Barbara Swift, Ginny Ghirardelli Co-Presidents

Our most significant effort this past year has been to lead the process for expanding our League to include the Bluffton Area. It started with encouragement from LWVSC after the Bluffton League

disbanded. We were not successful in simply inviting their members to join our League, so, with the growth of the Bluffton area (888%); it made sense to expand our League. We had the support and assistance of the State League and we followed the guidelines set out by the LWWUS in our process. The Board made a recommendation to expand and change our name, and at a called General Meeting, members approved. The bylaws change is being made at the Annual Meeting.

This year we had eleven Candidates meetings, six were League-sponsored and five were held by other groups with the League providing a moderator. This resulted in excellent League visibility, and also inspired a reporter to investigate and publish campaign financial information.

On the local level, we were well represented in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

At his final Town Council meeting, we presented outgoing Mayor Tom Peebles with a certificate of appreciation and honorary membership in the League. Our League was given a plaque from the Census Office in thanks "as a valued partner". A thank you letter was also received from the NAACP for hosting candidates' forums.

We met with legislators, wrote letters and made public statement on League issues regarding local public policy, education, voting laws, voting machines, women's equality, a moral budget and redistricting.

In mid-winter of 2010, we presented a "Making Democracy Work" award to Harriett Keyserling who was instrumental in founding the League on Beaufort County. Several members attended her memorial service in March.

We published a "Guide to Elected Officials for Hilton Head Island and Bluffton, SC" yearly.

We participated at various levels of LWWSC and LWWUS:

- Barbara attended LWWUS Convention in June.
- Janet Law, Treasurer, and Barbara attended LWWSC League Leaders Day in the summer.
- Fran Holt, Sally McGarry and Ginny attended LWWSC Legislative Advocacy Day in Columbia in February.
- We participated in two conference calls with LWWSC President Barbara Zia and members of other Leagues,
- We participated in a LWWUS Webinar on the subject of "The Welcoming League".
- We received a grant from the Brennan Center for Justice (funded through the LWWUS) for hosting a program on the Judicial Selection Process in South Carolina.

HORRY COUNTY MAL UNIT – Elizabeth Weems

The Redistricting Forum with Keynote Speaker, Bobbie Bowers was a great success.

Our Voter Registration Drive at Horry County Public Schools on school registration day - went very well.

We continued working steadily throughout the year on public transportation and defeating the proposed coal-fired power plant in Pamplico (near Florence).

Five of our ten League members were on the Citizens Advisory Council for Coast RTA (the public bus service) and attended the monthly meetings. Our League spoke to Horry County Council and Loris City Council several times regarding the need for more bus routes and more funding for COAST.

We partnered with Coastal Conservation League in our fight against the proposed coal-fired power plant. We attended many public meetings in Pamplico, attended several public in-put meetings in Loris, Conway and Myrtle Beach, attended a Santee-Cooper Board Meeting to give public in-put, wrote LTES. Santee-Cooper decided not to build the plant.

Horry County Leaguers continued our participation in the Citizens Advisory Council to Coast RTA. Advocacy for dedicated funding continued via addressing Horry County Council, and attending the Horry County Council Budget Retreat.

August through October we worked tirelessly to educate voters about the referendum question to be on the November ballot regarding funding for Coast RTA. We made displays and placed them in the Horry County branch libraries, contributed \$100.00 to Coast, addressed the following organizations about the referendum - Trinity Methodist Church, Aynor Town Council, Lutheran Church in Conway, Little River Rotarians, Executive Committee of the Horry County Democratic Party, Churches Assisting People Board.

We spoke on a local radio station, had a table at the Loris Bog Off where we advised people about the referendum, conversed with County Council Representatives. We handed out hundreds of flyers. The referendum passed with an almost 2/3rds majority!

Voter registration drives were held in Feb. at the Myrtle Beach Senior Job and Volunteer Fair and again in September at Coastal Carolina University, at the Coast RTA bus depot, at Food Lion in Conway, and voter registration materials were placed in grocery stores, senior centers, high schools, etc. We also spoke with Horry County Voter Registration Office about voting machines and training for the clerks.

We held a District 8 candidate forum in May and a Board of Education candidate forum in September. At their request, we monitored Board elections at the Bridgewater Academy School in August.

We had various and numerous speakers address us at our monthly meetings and are proud to announce that our membership has increased from 10 to 15.

Now I realize why we are all so TIRED! I didn't realize how much work we have done these past two years!

LWV of SPARTANBURG COUNTY – Mary Deku

During the past two years the Spartanburg League has accomplished much in many areas of the civic life of our community. In the area of voter service, we held two forums for the School District #2 candidates in the fall of 2009 as well as a forum for the contested state, county and city races. We also did intensive all-day voter registration at Westgate Mall in the fall, at Spring Fling in May and at the Mount Moriah Church Health Fair in June. At these community events, we registered about 75 people. In fact, voter registration goes on continually with registration drives in the county high schools. And, in the high schools we registered about 750 during the year. Many thanks to Ruth Stanton and Helen Bennett who have both been very active in these events. And, this team is now offering a session on how government works which the schools have been eager to take advantage of – providing new opportunities for reaching the youth with the message that they have to be a part of making democracy work.

Jan Hammett has taken our Natural Resources portfolio and run with it. She and her committee lobbied Senators Graham and DeMint as well as Rep. Bob Inglis in regard to the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009. They also wrote letters to the editor, emailed elected officials and attended County Council meetings.

And, Jan has taken on a lot personally – first and foremost, she ran for the Soil and Water Commission and WON! She also graduated from the “Citizens’ Academy” in Spartanburg and co-founded Spartanburg Citizens for Recycling.

Other activities included attending forums and conferences on Clean Air and Water and making presentations to various groups about the importance of recycling.

Climate Change is the latest area of involvement for this committee. Through their efforts, the Spartanburg League has been chosen to receive a Climate Change grant from LWVUS. This will fund a speaker and a “climate change soapbox” at Spring Fling --- individuals representing different people who will be affected by climate change in the future will “speak out” as fairgoers walk by. And this committee has gotten our League a significant presence in the social media through Facebook.

Finally, the Spartanburg League is glad to hear that Jan has agreed to serve as Natural Resources Chair on the state level. You go, Jan!

Meanwhile, Alice Henderson has chaired our education portfolio and she continues to create good arguments for the League’s position and to get those messages to the people in charge.

Our League has taken a big interest in re-districting and has had a presence at some of the re-districting meetings in our area. And, our census activities during 2009-2010 were extensive. We were a Complete Count committee and worked with numerous other organizations to bring our local participation up to a higher level.

Our campaign to get signatures on petitions to carry the message of “Goodbye, Minimally Adequate Education,” was extraordinarily successful.

And, we were awarded a Judicial Diversity grant from LWVUS in which we are bringing the message of the need for diversity to the children who participate in Boys and Girls Clubs – and 400 of them will take that message to 3 adults each. So, we hope to reach 1200 adults with information about our state judiciary system and the need to have all of us represented among the judges.

A new activity for us this year was participation in the Heritage Parade; our entry in the parade was a success. And, currently, President Mary DeKu is participating in the Citizens’ Academy, an 8-week series of experiential lessons about how our community operates. Others have participated as well.

Mary and Don Miles have been faithful observers writing up an account of what’s happening at County Council meetings and publishing it in our newsletter. Better than the newspaper!

And, speaking of the newsletter, even though she’s employed, in school and has three small children, Megan DeMoss faithfully puts out our newsletter and maintains our website. Many thanks, Megan!

Of course, our social events carry on – salad supper in the spring; brunch in the fall; “Chilly Chili” party during the holidays; picnic in the summer.

We continue to enjoy trying to make democracy work in Spartanburg County! And to grow in affection for each other and determination to serve our community as we do it!

LWV of SUMTER COUNTY – Chuck Gibbs

This year it took the Sumter League a little time to get organized this year. On August 31, 2010, we met with Peggy Appler to make plans for the State Convention that will be held in Sumter on May 14-15, 2011. We held an organizational meeting at that time and elected offices for the 2010-2011 Membership year.

At that meeting it was decided that the Sumter League would become involved in the Judicial Diversity Campaign that the South Carolina LWV was initiating with the support of the LWVUS. Several representatives of our league agreed to attend the “Kick-Off” held in Charleston, SC on October 8. At the August meeting it was also agreed that we would try to host a series of public meetings featuring Judges from the various courts operating in Sumter County.

In due course, we were able to arrange for the use of the Seminar Room in Central Carolina Technical College’s new Health Sciences Center here in Sumter. We contacted the various courts and arranged to hear from the following: Magistrates Court—Chief Magistrate Kathy Ward; Circuit Court—Judge W. Jeffrey Young; Probate Court—Judge Dale Atkinson;

Family Court—Judge George McFaddin; Master in Equity—Judge Richard Booth. Each Judge was asked to describe his/her duties, the method by which they were selected or elected, and the diversity that exists within that court system.

I would like to say that we had large crowds attend each of the presentations, but that was not the case. However, each of the Judges made an excellent presentation on the issues we had asked them to address. They were most patient in answering questions and were willing to share experiences and concerns. The presentations were summarized and then featured in the next month’s issue of “The Voter.” We were most pleased with the results of this effort.

In January we had planned to hold our annual meeting with the Sumter County Legislative Delegation, but a snow storm cancelled that meeting for us. Unfortunately, we were unable to find a suitable alternative date for the meeting so that part of our annual program was lost.

In February we were able to compile our Directory of Elected Officials, Sumter County, 2011. The Copy Shop was again willing to print 2000 copies for distribution throughout the county at no cost to the League. We will recognize that firm for their generosity.

The Sumter League is now working hard to prepare to host the 2011 Biennial Convention of the South Carolina League of Woman Voters. We are looking forward to greeting our sisters and brothers from around the state to the beautiful city of Sumter. As I look over the Schedule of Events, I am pleased that the State Board has arranged what I am sure will be a most memorable convention. We have interesting speakers lined up and timely panel discussions in addition to the usual work on our Legislative Agenda. I would encourage each of you to come and share this time with us.