



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

SC Voter

Post Office Box 8453 • Columbia, SC 29202 • Phone & Fax: (803) 251-2726

Website: www.lwvsc.org

Volume 62, Issue 1

Summer 2012

THE STATE OF THE JUDICIARY

in South Carolina: "FROM RESEARCH TO REALITY"

TUESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2012

RECEPTION: 6:00 p.m. – PANEL: 7:00 p.m.

University of South Carolina School of Law

Senator Larry Martin

*Judiciary Committee Chair
Judicial Merit Selection Commission Vice Chair*

Senator Floyd Nicholson

Member, Judicial Merit Selection Commission

Robert Wilcox

Dean, University of South Carolina School of Law

Judge Carolyn Matthews

President, South Carolina Women Lawyers Association

Alice Paylor

President-Elect, South Carolina Bar Association

John Simpkins

Professor, Charleston School of Law



RSVP to angelwarren@msn.com

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina invites you to the closing of our two-year project on the importance of independence and diversity in the state judicial system with a public forum. The League and invited guests will review the results of our statewide education initiative. The League will unveil partial research results on the current state of the South Carolina judicial system's independence and diversity. Panelists

will share their views on issues related to judicial diversity and independence. Constance Anastopoulo with Charleston School of Law will moderate.

SC Women Lawyers Assoc. is a co-sponsor. The event takes place at the USC School of Law Auditorium (S. Main & Greene Sts., Columbia), and is free and open to the public. Free two-hour CLE credits for SC attorneys have been requested.

Highlights:

- *The State of the Judiciary* 1
- *National League Convention* 2-3
- *Voter Protection Grant* 3
- *High School Voter Registration* 3
- *LWVUS Convention* 4-5
- *Legislative Audit Council* 6
- *Farm Bill and Our Health* 7
- *MLD Welcomes New Coach* 7
- *State Legislative Review* 8
- *Money & Politics* 9
- *New League Position* 10
- *Voter Photo ID* 11
- *Mary Deku & Chuck Gibbs Honored*... 11
- *Important League Dates* 12

Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!



NATIONAL LEAGUE CONVENTION

The Power of the Vote: *Imagine, Commit, Act!*



Delegates from the Palmetto State at Convention were: Barbara Zia (from left), Sharon Fratepietro, Jan Hammett, Dee Goforth, Shayna Howell, Sheila Gallagher, Karen Wessel, Rita Paul, Peggy Appler, Janelle Rivers, Jeanette Roveri, JoAnne Day, Sandra Gray, Mary Klenz (LWVUS Board liaison to SC), Keller Barron.

Fourteen South Carolina League leaders traveled by train, plane and auto to take part in the 2012 LWVUS 50th biennial convention in Washington, DC, June 9-12. They joined 650 delegates from 45 other states, District of Columbia and Virgin Islands.

South Carolina delegates learned many new things and brought back important ideas for their Leagues to use. They attended workshops and caucuses, and discussed many of the critical issues

facing our democracy this election year. The League's *Power the Vote 2012* initiative was highlighted throughout as delegates celebrated recent successes in protecting voting rights and secret money in elections. Building on this theme, U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder addressed the convention .

Delegates reelected Elisabeth MacNamara of Georgia as national President and elected a new Board of Directors that includes South Carolina's favorite daughter Peggy Appler. They voted on the organization's agenda

for the next two years, placing a special emphasis on working to fight the flood of secret money in politics, adopting an update of the 1988 LWVUS agriculture position and concurring with the LWVDC sentencing policy position. After energetic debate, delegates adopted the proposed budget which increases the National Per Member Payment by \$1 to \$31 for the 2012-14 biennium.

We were welcomed to the convention by Washington DC Delegate to the House of Representatives Holmes Norton, and were treated to remarks by Kathleen Hall

continued on page 3 -



Barbara Zia represented South Carolina in the roll call of states.



During a plenary session break, Keller Barron (from left), JoAnne Day and Rita Paul from Columbia one of the many policy issues before the Convention.

NATIONAL CONVENTION:

continued from page 2 -

Jamieson of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. At our banquet, Pollster John Zogby provided delegates with his insights about the upcoming election.

Convention speakers included U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder who described his efforts to protect voting rights. In reference to the League's voter protection activities he said, "I urge you – regardless of the opposition you face – to stay true, and remain fiercely committed, to the principles that have always guided the League of Women Voters and that can ensure that the 21st will be another 'American century.'"

Trevor Potter, President of the Campaign Legal Center and most recently known for his work with comedian/TV personality Stephen Colbert, Former Congressman Mickey Edwards (R-OK),

and Political Reporter Eleanor Clift urged the League to look closely at the steps needed to fix the broken campaign finance system and to press forward using our community-based power on behalf of all voters and for elections that are determined by the voters.

We were proud to represent South Carolina state and local Leagues at Convention 2012. The League is a vibrant organization of volunteer men and women from all across our great nation. We felt so fortunate to have had this opportunity to learn and network with them."



The South rises again! Newly elected LWVUS Board members: From left, Mary Klenz, Vice President/NC; Elisabeth MacNamara, President/GA; Peggy Appling, Director/SC.

LWVSC Receives Voter Protection Grant

LWVSC recently received a grant to fund activities in the coming year that will mitigate the effects of voter suppression laws and increase voting access in our state. The grant comes through the LWV Education Fund's Public Advocacy for Voter Protection project with whom we have collaborated over the past 3 years to oppose photo ID and measures to restrict voter registration. The focus of the new South Carolina project will be on educating voters about voting procedures, including the possible implementation of photo ID for voters, and on increasing access to voter registration opportunities, including compliance with the National Voter Registration Act (specifically, opportunities at public assistance agencies and at public and private postsecondary schools). Work on the project is underway

as it must be rolled out quickly given the fast approaching November election.

A new section of LWVSC's website, Time to Vote SC, (<http://lwwsc.org/votesc.html>) has comprehensive information about voting in SC. The Toolkits page offers downloadable educational materials on current voting procedures and pending changes (photo ID requirement), including a Power Point presentation.

If you'd like to arrange for a League speaker on voting issues, please contact Lynn Teague (803-556-9802; Teague_L@bellsouth.net).

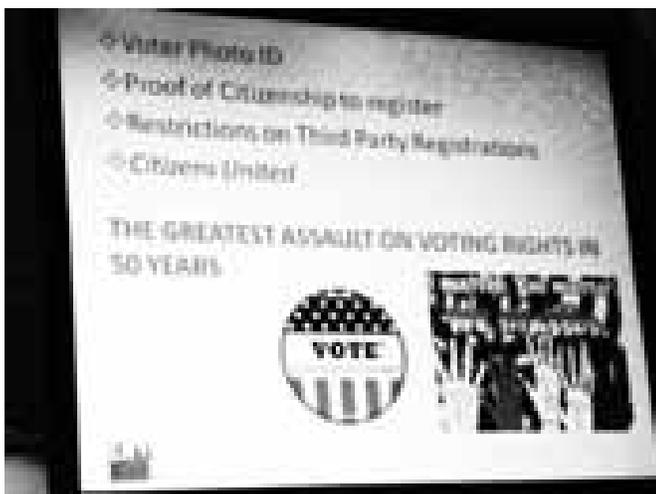
We invite all League members to work with us on the new grant and take advantage of funding opportunities. Contact Barbara Zia to share questions or interest (803-251-2726; ziab1@comcast.net).

High School Voter Registration

*By Paula Appling, EdD,
LWVSC Board Director,
Voter Registration*

In fall 2011, the LWVSC applied for a youth voter registration grant from the LWVEF and was funded for \$4,000 to register eligible high school seniors in SC schools from January to June 2012. A special focus was on schools in communities that are underrepresented in registered voters. Nine local Leagues made the commitment to participate in the grant program. LWVSC was very successful in its efforts. Across the state of SC, 180 local League volunteers registered 4,442 students to vote; distributed voter information materials to 6,238 students; and contributed 270 volunteer hours. Congratulations to everyone who participated in this highly successful effort.





SOUTH CAROLINA *Delegate Voices* ON *LWVUS Convention*

By Jan Hammett, LWV/Spartanburg County President

On January 18, 2012, I was introduced to our LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara for the first time. On the morning after the screening of the film "Patriocracy" in Columbia several of us met for breakfast. After eating and critiquing the film, Elisabeth invited us all to attend the 50th biennial national convention in Washington, DC. Thanks to my local League, Spartanburg County, I was one of those lucky enough to be a part of the League of Women Voters' 50th Convention celebration.

This would be my first LWVUS Convention. Therefore, I had no expectations, no pre-plan other than sit and listen and take in as much as I could. I had been forewarned there would be a lot of information coming at us, and it would be exciting and fun! It was a privilege to experience the opening plenary with so many people from around the United States all focused on how to preserve and uphold our equal rights and democracy. We discussed political issues, attended workshops and caucuses. And, in the true way of democracy, came together to debate and vote, thereby forming consensus.

I enjoyed hearing Attorney General

Eric Holder speak. He believes, as we do, that of all the freedoms we enjoy today, nothing is more important, more sacred, that the right to vote. We can empower the vote when local Leagues everywhere work on Voter Registration, Voter Education and Voter Mobilization. A great place to start is www.VOTE411.org. If you meet with your local elections officials, some excellent sample questions can be found at ww.lwv.org/content/questions-local-elections-officials.

One profound event, for me, was watching the tenacious and persevering League member from Charleston, Sharon Fratepietro. Sharon worked tirelessly because she understood that a new national League position on Sentencing Reform needed to be adopted. I am happy to report that she and other League leaders succeeded. We adopted a new position by concurrence with LWV District of Columbia's position on Sentencing Policy. (See Sharon's article in this issue.)

One workshop was on Social Media. Facebook and Twitter, as far as I can see, will be the new way to communicate. Technology is here and to those jumping in to master it, the information highway

will be yours. The younger membership knows this and we must meet them at their level of expertise. We can do this! If you have questions or need help, contact Stephanie Drahan at sdrahan@lwv.org. Try getting together with other League members for a training session. Stephanie can also help you if you decide to "Twitter."

One very serious issue I see happening is the limitless amount of money being poured into our politics and elections. A sleeping giant with an insatiable appetite for money and power is coming out of hibernation. The only thing standing in its way is our Democracy, and the heart of Democracy has skipped a beat. Voters are being suppressed and that is not a good thing for our freedoms. Take limitless amounts of money out of politics and we will get a better Congress. A Congress that truly represents "We the People and not "We the Corporations."

Be present, invest your time and yourselves, be creative, keep the progress going, educate, advocate and have fun doing it!

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 2013 State Convention in Spartanburg!

In his remarks to Convention delegates, former Rep. Mickey Edwards (R/OK)

encouraged citizen advocacy to unite and conquer:

"Confrontation is the way to make change . . .

Confront legislators and tell them what you want . . .

The power to make change is in this room."



4



Convention Highlights from Members:

By Barbara Zia, LWVSC Co-President

Though it's difficult to distill 5 action-packed days into 3 big ideas, here are recurring themes from convention. My overall take-away is that the League is needed more than ever before in the nation and in South Carolina. The policy issues on everyone's minds and lips were voter suppression and campaign finance.

1. Need for campaign finance reform
– Democracy is at risk from a flood of money from unidentified sources into campaigns, owing to the Citizens United court decision. Unlimited, undisclosed special interest money in politics is linked to other democratic ills, such as voter suppression legislation and low voter turnout. This has a special SC twist: Our campaign finance and ethics laws need complete overhaul, in the wake of so-called 'committees' pouring cash from secret sources into political and legislative campaigns, and 250 disqualified candidates and election outcomes that are decided at or even before the state primary. Democracy in our state is at a critical juncture.

There are ways to take back democracy. Suggestions from speakers include: open primaries; statutory change, such as DISCLOSE Act, redefinition of "independence," restore majority vote in the Senate/rein in filibuster power; independent redistricting commissions; citizen activism to pressure Court, Congress, and White House; come together as Americans, not rival teams; shareholders resolutions to disclose corporate political spending; flackchecking.com to expose deceptive 3rd party ads; pressure media outlets to keep deceptive ads off the air.

2. Pervasive voter suppression is underway nationally, and Leagues are on the front lines fighting back. (Elisabeth MacNamara: We are seeing "...the greatest assault on voting rights in 50 years.") The latest is voter registration roll purging in Florida. We need to be on the lookout for similar attempts in SC. In South Carolina, the League's tireless work on photo id, restrictions on voter registration, and e-voting integrity has put state

officials on alert that we are watching closely. It was a tremendous source of pride for the SC delegation to be recognized for our voter protection leadership; and all our work is done by volunteers. AG Holder recognized the League's work in SC in opposing voter suppressive legislation. He reminded us that some misrepresent the League's motives in opposing voter suppression, but that "the arc of history has always bent toward expanding the voting franchise." On the positive side, we must work to modernize the voter registration system.

3. Importance of messaging in every League activity--from raising visibility to membership and leadership development to advocacy to voter engagement to fundraising. Use of new forms of social media is critical to reach and engage a wider audience, such as young voters and member prospects. We learned from pros in all of these endeavors.

By Janelle Rivers, LWV/Columbia Area

Perhaps the overarching single take-away for me is the importance of engaging League members and recruiting others to become active in studying the issues and taking action to protect the public from a long list of activities that are motivated by short-term financial or political returns for small numbers of people. This is truly a time when the privileged few have mobilized to take short-term gains at the expense of options that would be in the long-term public interest. The issues that took top priority had one common thread, the quest for power – most often corporate power.

I think everyone would agree that campaign finance reform is critical. Some of the needed changes could be slow to happen. Meanwhile, there are actions that League members can take. One action that members can take now is to notify TV stations that the public is aware that stations can refuse to air deceptive 3rd party ads. For more information, go to www.flackcheck.org and check out the sections on the right side of the page titled "Stand by Your Ad" and "Send Email to Stations."

I was delighted that the League decided to review its position on the food supply. In recent years, various companies have

altered farming and changed the food supply in ways that range from genetically altered patented seeds to undesirable additives. Those changes combine to form a substantial, largely unregulated threat to public health.

The good news is that some positive things are already underway to address voter suppression and that the League now has positions to support advocacy for issues related to education and privatization.

I appreciated the experience, and I came away more convinced than ever that grassroots participation is vital. That takes the conversation back to the first point – the importance of engaging members and recruiting others.

By Dee Goforth, LWV/Spartanburg County, representing LWV/Greenville County

Five action-packed days, a wealth of knowledge...My three big ideas are:

1. Sentencing Reform Concurrence - - Alternatives to imprisonment, such as community-based corrections, treatment and rehabilitation, and other alternatives to prison have proven to be far more effective at reducing recidivism rates and at less cost to taxpayers. Alternatives keep offenders with their families and jobs, instead of in prison or jail with inmates convicted of violent crimes. LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.
2. Take Action on Climate issues - Vote Climate with California. Find out how your legislator voted on key environmental issues. Take action on climate issues utilizing social media, write a letter or submit editorials to your local paper.
3. Fundraising 101: Funding Power the Vote - - Whom should we ask? Members, Friends, Community Leaders, Allied Groups, Community Foundations, Businesses. Always remember success requires personal follow-up!

This was my first convention. There was so much to take in such a small amount of time. I really enjoyed the experience.



League Meets with Legislative Audit Council

By Eleanor Hare, PhD., LWVSC Board Director and Lynn Teague, LWVSC Board Director

League representatives met with the Legislative Audit Council (LAC) on June 28, to present the League's recommendations for increasing the accuracy, recountability and transparency of our election systems. LAC was represented by Director Perry K. Simpson, audit manager and general counsel Andrea Truitt, and auditors John C. Kresslein, Kristina Hooks, Beverly Riley and Amara Ransom. LWVSC was represented by Barbara Zia, Eleanor Hare, Duncan Buell, JoAnne Day, and Lynn Teague.

Mr. Simpson and Ms. Truett began the meeting by defining the scope of LAC's study. As one of his last official acts as senator, Senator McConnell authorized the LAC to conduct an audit of South Carolina's e-voting system. The study will not include other aspects of elections. Barbara Zia provided a brief introduction to the LWVSC's interest, as a non-partisan organization dedicated to civic participation. She stated that the LWVSC's focus with respect to voting equipment is on security and on addressing the sources of the many errors documented in the 2010 election in South Carolina. She noted that S.1025, a bill that would have helped by requiring audits before certification of results, passed the Senate unanimously, but died in the House.

Eleanor Hare summarized the LWVSC position. Because there is little money available to purchase a new system and there is no other system being proposed as a likely replacement, it is probable that South Carolina will continue to use the current Election Systems & Software (ES&S) system for several years. Our presentation was aimed at mitigating the

known problems of our voting system. Recommendations included:

1. A post-election audit of the electronic data files should be performed after every election to ensure that all votes are collected and counted.
2. Audit files and reports of post-election audits should be posted on the State Election Commission (SEC) website after every election to promote election transparency and improve voter confidence.
3. An audit of a random selection of paper ballots should be performed after every election in order to detect hacking or other problems with the scanners. This audit is a standard procedure, which is recommended wherever scanners are used to count ballots.
4. When a recount of paper ballots is required, the recount should be by hand or by some other process, such as using a different model scanner that is independently programmed.
5. Those of us who have seen the problems in the counties first hand proposed that the SEC be provided better funding and more authority to oversee statewide procedures.

In addition to confirming when all votes cast have been collected, the post-election audit can help county election directors identify any machines that have uncollected votes. System messages (in the electronic data file) can alert county directors to potential failures so that preventive action can be taken.

A recurrent theme was the importance of giving SEC the authority to enforce, rather than simply suggest, procedures in county election offices. This is not an official LWVSC position, but was suggested in order to help resolve problems of compliance.

The current equipment is costly to operate. All equipment, from ballots to batteries, must be purchased from ES&S. These costs, which are mostly borne by the counties, include paying annual maintenance fees in excess of one million dollars, printing ballots, formatting ballots and ES&S training. Intensive training is required in order to operate these complex voting systems correctly.

When asked about the cause of failure of the election audit bill (S.1025) in the General Assembly, Teague responded that failure in the House does not appear to be the result of any objections to the content of the bill itself.

It is expected that "commodity" hardware (computers, printers and scanners that are easily and affordably available such as pc, Mac, and iPad) will replace expensive single-purpose proprietary voting machines now in use. The commodity hardware would be used to print a paper ballot, which would be scanned and retained as the official record of the vote.

A report for the LAC describing the League's 7-year study of electronic voting machines, problems found in the current system and suggestions for their mitigation can be found at <http://lwvsc.org/files/lacpresentation20120628.pdf>.

SAVE THE DATE:

2012 South Carolina League Leaders Day

Calling All South Carolina LWV Members

You are cordially invited to this informative, fun event to help launch another exciting League year.

Saturday, September 15, 9:30-3:30

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall • 1715 Bull St., Columbia

WATCH FOR DETAILS IN THE MAIL AND AT WWW.LWVSC.ORG



6



Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!

How Does the Farm Bill Impact our Health?

By Marty Hucks, LWVSC Board Director, Healthcare

On June 21st the Farm Bill, officially known as “The Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012,” passed the U.S. Senate 64-35 in a rare show of bipartisanship. The House is slated to begin deliberations on the legislation on July 11. While it is clear that the Farm Bill influences farmers, rural communities, and agribusiness, this food policy – updated every five years- also plays a role in the health of Americans by impacting food safety and availability.

The current version of the bill does not propose any cuts to the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as the food stamp program, and increases funding for fresh fruits and vegetables in the program. About 80% of the bill’s \$969 billion (over 10 years) is earmarked for SNAP. Currently, more than 46 million Americans and 18% of all South Carolinians receive assistance through SNAP, but participants in the program purchase significantly fewer fruits and vegetables and forty-percent more sugar-sweetened drinks than those

not on the program. The 2008 Farm Bill designated funding to pilot studies, which are ongoing, designed to examine incentives that might encourage healthier food purchases. The bill also affects school lunches.

For years, debate has revolved around whether the food subsidies contained in the Farm Bill have contributed to the obesity epidemic by making calorie-dense foods, such as corn, more abundant and thus cheaper than healthier alternatives. The current thinking of many experts is to move away from the focus on removing subsidies as a means of controlling obesity and instead begin to advocate for policies that expand access to healthy foods in both rural and urban communities.

The 2008 Farm Bill defined a food desert as an “area with limited access to affordable and nutritious food,” and approximately 23.5 million Americans live in such a setting. According to a recent report by the USDA, more than 5% of the US population lives at least a mile from a supermarket and does not have access to a

vehicle. Thus, people living in areas with limited access often rely on convenience stores that do not stock all the foods needed to eat healthily and that charge more for the healthy choices they do offer. In South Carolina Richland, Orangeburg, Calhoun, Clarendon, Kershaw, Fairfield, Chester, and Lancaster counties are being studied to see if they meet the federal designation. The current bill includes a provision to encourage SNAP enrollees to participate in Community Supported Agriculture programs where individuals support (financially or through labor contributions) local farmers and share in the risks and benefits of farming.

Some critics of the current legislation had hoped to see the inclusion of the Sanders Amendment, which would have allowed individual states to determine whether or not to require labeling of foods regarding the presence of genetically engineered ingredients. This is a debate that will likely continue, as some states plan to put this to a vote in November.

Membership and Leadership Development Program Welcomes New Coach

By Janie Shipley, LWVSC Vice President, Member Services

Ted Volskay hit the ground running, after accepting a position as a State Coach in the Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) program. Ted has been assigned to work with LWV of Florence Area and LWV of Georgetown County. Ted has been a member of the LWV of Greenville County for 10 years. He has been very active in many projects with his local League, including assisting with organization of forums on privatization of Social Security and on public education in Greenville County. He was closely involved in the preparation of the Judicial Diversity and Independence website and helped organize the Judicial Diversity and Independence forum. Ted assisted in the preparation of the SC Voter ID power point presentation. He has served on the LWV/Greenville’s Board

since 2009. Ted joined the League of Women Voters because he wanted to make a difference in the community, now he is extending his efforts to make a difference in South Carolina. When joining the MLD program, Ted said the League “is the best opportunity for those who value democracy and social justice to have voice that will be valued and respected”. Ted is an environmental consultant specializing in wastewater treatment and groundwater remediation and brings a wealth of talent and insights to the MLD program.

The MLD program is a partnership between LWVUS, LWVSC and local Leagues to revitalize our organization from the grassroots up. With support from national and state coaches, local Leagues employ best practices intentionally focused on strengthening and growing

the League and the League’s impact. At the April LWVSC Council meeting, a panel discussion was led by Shayna Howell, former national coach focusing on these best practices. Local League representatives Julie Wittig (Hilton Head/ Bluffton), Mary Horres (Charleston) and Hannah Reig (Florence) discussed the ways their local Leagues make themselves more visible in the community and thus recruit more members, ways they retain members by keeping them involved and engaged, and ways that they are able to strengthen the League’s leadership. If anyone is interested in working with the MLD program through serving as a state coach, he/she is invited to contact Janie Shipley, janrel@mindspring.com.



State Legislative Session in Review

By Lynn Teague, LWVSC Board Director, Legislative Advocacy

The regular session of the General Assembly ended June 7, 2012, although legislators have returned to Columbia to address budget issues and consider the Governor's vetoes. A final effort to reform state retirement pensions was also completed. From the League's perspective, the legislative record in the second year of this two-year session is one of several very important wins, and some unfortunate losses.

The League supported two voting - related bills in this final year of the session. H.4945, sponsored by Rep. Laurie Funderburk, passed in both houses of the General Assembly. The law will provide for on-line voter registration. It also provides for increased cooperation between state agencies in verifying voter information. The Pew Center for the States has identified these measures as important tools to reduce errors in voter registration rolls, and worked with Rep. Funderburk to develop the South Carolina bill. This bill was signed by the Governor and will become effective after preclearance by the U.S. Department of Justice under the Voting Rights Act. There is no reason to expect that the DOJ would reject this useful bill.

S.1025, which would have required post-election audits along lines recommended by the League to verify election data, did well in the Senate where it had bipartisan sponsorship (Senators Campsen, a Republican, and Scott, a Democrat). However, Rep. Jim Harrison, retiring Chair of the House Judiciary Committee, chose not to hold subcommittee or committee meetings on the bill and it therefore died in the House. Members of the House Judiciary Committee have often expressed their deep concern for the verification of every single vote, so failure to follow through on this bill is not easily explained.

Two voter registration bills that the League has opposed, H.4549 and S.304, have been defeated. The first of these would have placed severe restrictions on voter registration drives, requirements so onerous that organizations from the League to the Boy Scouts and faith groups would have been compelled to cease registration drives. This bill was vigorously opposed by the League and our

voting rights partners -- the NAACP, the ACLU, AARP, and other organizations. The defeat of this bill was an important step in maintaining our ability to offer all citizens an opportunity to vote.

S.304 would have required proof of citizenship at the time of registration, imposing documentation requirements similar to those in the photo ID law (R54) that is at present opposed by the LWVSC in court in the case *SC v. Holder* in federal District Court. Sen. Scott objected to this bill and was effective in preventing it from being brought to the Senate floor.

H.3757/S.1135, a bill to create stronger penalties for human trafficking, has been supported by the League and was passed by both House and Senate. Although the House version originally did not include asset forfeiture for traffickers, the issue was eventually resolved in favor of the Senate's version, which includes asset forfeiture and is therefore a much stronger disincentive for trafficking. The bill has been signed by the Governor and will be effective Dec. 18, 2012.

In education, H.4894/S1325 would have provided tax deductions for private and home school students and was opposed by the League. It was passed the House 65-49, and was referred to the Senate Finance Committee, where it received unfavorable minority reports. Objections filed by Sen. Leventis and Sen. Matthews prevented a vote on the bill on the Senate floor. Attempts to append the bill contents to the state budget and other tax measures failed. However, we can expect renewed attempts to pass a similar bill in the next session.

A bill to provide greater public school choice through inter-district transfers, S.1256, missed the crossover date from Senate to House and therefore died in this session.

H.4317, which would have strengthened early childhood visitation programs through systematic and uniform reviews of outcomes, was supported by the League but did not pass the House in time for crossover to the Senate.

S.604, opposed by the League, would have withdrawn South Carolina from the Common Core curriculum. This effort failed in the Senate.

In environmental issues, S.461, ABC Recycling, was strongly supported by the conservation community and by the League. It encountered problems in the House Agriculture and Environment Subcommittee where it was vehemently opposed by representatives of the SC Hospitality Association (who asserted that they had not been "at the table" earlier) and the Charleston Restaurant Association. Unfortunately, debate on the bill was adjourned, theoretically permitting it to be brought back before the subcommittee, but the bill died without any further progress.

H.4654/S1126, which eliminates private right of action under the Pollution Control Act and exposes isolated wetlands to unregulated development, passed, with amendments that preserve the existing court cases involving the development of the port of Savannah. This is an unfortunate loss, which can be attributed to vigorous lobbying by the business community and especially the Chamber of Commerce. Business interests testified that they feared "frivolous" lawsuits. (Protections against frivolous suits already exist in our legal code.)

S.1149, the so-called "born alive" bill, passed both houses of the General Assembly and was signed by the Governor on May 25. Although amended to remove some of the most objectionable elements, it remains an unfortunate intrusion into family health care decision-making. It has been effective since May 25, 2012.

S.102 was opposed by the LWVSC. It will eliminate abortion funding through state exchanges under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. It includes exemptions for the life of the mother, rape and incest. It passed both houses and was ratified as R211 (reconciling Senate and House versions) on June 5. It has been effective since June 7, 2012.

The information that is available to us at present points toward both elections and education funding as major issues in the next session of the General Assembly. The League is working to be ready to take a significant part in these discussions by assembling information and developing advocacy strategies before the General Assembly convenes in its next session.



Money in Politics Out of Control in SC, US

This op-ed by Karen Wessel and Fran Holt was published in The Island Packet on June 23, 2012. Karen serves as President and Fran as Vice President for LWV/Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Area. Re-printed with permission.

As the John Edwards trial ended without a decision on five of the six counts, the pundits are surmising that the jurors' inability to act more decisively is at least partly due to *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the Supreme Court's decision that campaign contributions are expressions of free speech.

Also in the news these days is the estimate that the Mitt Romney and Barack Obama campaigns will spend \$1 billion each to try to win the presidency. This too is attributed at least in part to *Citizens United*.

The question that comes to those of us who are proponents of campaign finance reform is: What measures can be taken to change the current system?

The League of Women Voters of the U.S. is taking action in various ways. It filed an amicus brief urging the Supreme Court to take up a case that challenges the assumptions in the *Citizens United* decision.

The League also has set up a campaign finance task force that has examined proposed amendments to the U.S. Constitution in order to rectify the consequences of *Citizens United*. The task force has not recommended support for the proposed amendments, because it concluded that they "illustrate the complexity of the issue, the risk of unintended consequences, and the difficulty of crafting precise language in the form of a constitutional amendment."

We do advocate passage of the DISCLOSE Act of 2012 that would require financial disclosure for all campaign ads.

We're joining with other organizations to petition President Obama to appoint five new commissioners to the Federal Election Commission, which has not been enforcing current campaign finance law.

The League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area supports these efforts.

South Carolina needs to pass its own reforms as voter confidence in our elected officials is at a new low.

So what are changes we can make to South Carolina laws that keep elections

from just being fundraising competitions?

John Crangle, executive director of Common Cause of South Carolina, recently spoke to the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area and made it clear that one action needed is the prohibition of "leadership PACs," political action committees associated with a state official.

The state Senate has prohibited leadership PACs, but the House of Representatives has not. Crangle told us that the Palmetto Leadership Council, which is closely affiliated with S.C. House Speaker Bobby Harrell, gave contributions to many candidates for the state House of Representatives and state Senate.

According to an article in *The (Charleston) Post and Courier* on April 29, the Palmetto Leadership Council also appears to have been involved in steering hundreds of thousands of dollars in contract work to sitting legislators and their families.

We commend state Sen. Tom Davis of Beaufort for voiding the contribution that was given to him by the Palmetto Leadership Council.

The League of Women Voters supports strong disclosure laws and laws that allow voters to know who elected officials work for and what they do in their job. With fewer than 50 percent of our citizens regularly voting, we need laws that create more voter confidence and trust in elected officials.

Political campaigns are for the public good and require full public support. We need a carrot and stick approach: some form of public campaign financing and tough rules on political gifts and lobbying to prevent special interests from subverting the public interest.

Both citizens and political leaders must take responsibility to create new systems that can substantially change the money and politics equation in favor of the people. Join the League of Women Voters in demanding action in Washington and in South Carolina.

League Works to Stop the Flow of Money Into Politics & Clean Up Campaigns

Delegates to the 2012 LWVUS Convention committed to undertake a comprehensive action campaign at all levels of the League to inform voters about the threat that unlimited and undisclosed campaign spending poses. The Supreme Court's June 25th ruling in *American Tradition Partnership v. Bullock*, (reversing the Montana Supreme Court and re-affirming the view that against all history, evidence and rational experience, unlimited campaign spending by third parties has no corrupting influence on representative democracy) is evidence that the League's focus on campaign finance reform could not be more important.

The LWVUS Campaign Finance Task Force has recently completed two informational papers for League members. One is "[LWVUS in Action on Campaign Finance](#)," a brief history of LWVUS action on campaign finance, what the LWVUS has done, is doing now and what Leagues can also do. The other is a "[Review of Constitutional Amendments Proposed in Response to Citizens' United](#)," which includes a useful table of the proposed amendments and what they address. Both papers are available online at <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/money-elections>. The Task Force was formed in April 2012 to advise the LWVUS Board on short - and long-term strategies for advocacy on campaign finance reform. Task Force members are Chris Carson (CA), Pat Donath (MI, LWVUS Board), Allison Feher (WA), Susan Lederman (NJ), Ann Luther (ME), Theresa Schneder (MT), Jill Ward (ME) and co-chairs Judy Duffy (MN) and Norman Turrill (LWVUS Board).



Forming A New League Position

By Sharon Fratepietro, LWV/Charleston Area

League of Women Voters policy allows any League, whether national, state or local, to take specific steps to concur with a second League's position on an issue that the second League has studied in depth and adopted by consensus. This sensible shortcut replaces the need for each individual League to do a time-consuming study on every issue of interest.

At the LWVUS convention in June, delegates overwhelmingly voted to approve a national concurrence with two criminal justice positions previously studied and adopted by the LWVDC (District of Columbia). These new positions on which national and state Leagues can now advocate are: *The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.*

The inspirational seed for this concurrence began in 2009 - 2010, when LWV/Charleston Area did a study on illegal drugs in South Carolina (<http://lwvcharleston.org/DrugStudy.html>). At that time the LWVUS had no position on drug policy, nor did our state League. Based on their study, the Charleston League adopted the position that illegal drug use should be considered a public health issue and not a cause for incarceration.

In order to advocate at state government levels, a position needs to be held by the state League and not just by one local League. So at the 2011 LWVSC Convention, the Charleston League asked

the LWVSC to concur with the Charleston positions. Prior to the convention the Charleston League had sent mandatory, educational information to all state Leagues in time for thoughtful consideration. At the LWVSC convention the delegates voted to adopt this slightly amended position: ***Illegal drug use should be considered a public health issue. Drug use and drug addiction should be addressed by substance abuse treatment programs and education, instead of incarceration.*** Now any League in South Carolina can advocate based on this strong position.

Until recently, the LWVUS had no position on either drug policy or sentencing policy (other than opposition to the death penalty), and so the LWVUS has failed to have a voice in many related policy decisions on Capitol Hill. Just as important, Leagues in states that have not done studies on drug or sentencing policies also have been unable to advocate on those issues at their government levels.

Now this history needs to backtrack a moment to the 2010 LWVUS Convention in Atlanta. The Charleston League sponsored a caucus there that revealed strong interest among attending delegates to propose a national concurrence on some aspect of sentencing policy at the LWVUS Convention 2012. Volunteers then created the Ad Hoc Committee on Sentencing Reform; Charleston League member Sharon Fratepietro and LWVNYC League member Jane Colvin offered to chair the committee.

The chairs asked two national sentencing reform organizations (The Sentencing Project and Families Against

Mandatory Minimums) what sentencing reform positions would be most useful if adopted by the LWVUS. The chairs also considered which positions would be most likely to win enough approving votes at the 2012 LWVUS Convention. They chose positions to support alternatives to incarceration (for any offense) when appropriate, and to oppose mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. The LWV/District of Columbia already had studied and adopted these positions, and the LWVDC agreed to sponsor a concurrence proposal at Convention. The rest is history: The concurrence proposal received strong support from Leagues across the country during annual Program Planning, and at the LWVUS Convention 2012, delegates adopted the sentencing positions by concurrence.

The United States locks up more of its citizens than any other country in the world. With 5% of the world's population, we incarcerate 25% of the world's prisoners. Rwanda is a distant second in this infamous ranking. State prisons and local jails in the U.S. hold over 400,000 drug offenders. More than half the inmates in our federal prisons are there for drug offenses, often because of mandatory minimum sentences.

I hope you agree that all state Leagues should consider addressing these alarming statistics whenever possible. As of the LWVUS Convention 2012, every League now has a national position on which to base that advocacy.

YAHOO! Group: LWVSC Conversations

A take away for all of us from national Convention this month is the critical importance of social media in connecting with current and prospective League members. We must reach out to people where they are – and many today are on-line. The energy and productivity of LWVUS email lists is impressive. A special benefit of these lists is the opportunity they provide for League members from all parts of the nation to

discuss myriad topics, from campaign finance to how to handle videotaping at a candidates forum. No matter what issue you are dealing with, there are Leaguers somewhere who have dealt with it before and are willing to share their experience and advice.

At the state League level, we have our website and leader email lists and the quarterly newsletter but no way to communicate in a more conversational

manner with the membership at-large. Until now. Yahoo! Groups is a free service that allows people with a common interest to stay informed. A group dedicated to South Carolina League members is available for all LWVSC membership. To join LWVSC Conversations, email paulaappling@earthlink.net and request an invitation.



10



Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!

*S.C. Senate
Recognizes
Chuck Gibbs*

On May 15, Chuck Gibbs, who recently retired as LWV/Sumter County President, received a state Senate Resolution in his honor, sponsored by Sen. Phil Leventis from Sumter County.

Members of the Senate adopted the resolution to honor Chuck "for his years of outstanding and dedicated service to his community, his state, and his nation." S. 1528 documents Chuck's significant civic contributions: his long service as U.S. Air Force pilot, including combat duty in Vietnam; his leadership as LWV Sumter County president and treasurer and LWVSC voters service vice president; his authorship of the section on South Carolina history in LWVSC's Know Your State; his service as trustee for Sumter School District #17, officer of the Sumter County Historical Society; his leadership roles with the Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Sumter County Genealogical Society, and in his faith community. The Resolution also recognizes Joan, Chuck's beloved bride of 58 years.

The list of all that Chuck has done to make his community, state and nation better for all is impressive. The full Resolution is at http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess119_2011-2012/bills/1528.htm.

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina appreciates the leadership of Mary and Chuck and of all our wonderful League members who commit their passion, time and energy to make democracy work in our state.

South Carolina V. Holder, Voter Photo ID Court Case

The League of Woman Voters of South Carolina believes that eligible South Carolina citizens should be empowered and enabled to vote without needless barriers standing in their way. The League is committed to ensuring all eligible voters can exercise this right. In late March, the LWVSC intervened in South Carolina v. Holder to defend the Department of Justice's decision to prohibit implementation of the State's new photo ID law. The case is before a 3-judge panel in U.S District Court in the District of Columbia. Throughout May and June, the parties have been engaged in fact finding – the "discovery" phase of the lawsuit. Such fact finding includes review of relevant document, expert analysis of the law's purpose and effect, and formal interviews of the Law's main supporters and opponents.

While trial was originally scheduled for late July, the case has been delayed due to South Carolina's failure to produce all relevant documents during the initial discovery period. Accordingly, the Court ordered on July 3rd that discovery will

be extended through early August. Under the new schedule, oral arguments in the litigation will not be heard by the Court until September 24th, and the Court will not issue its final decision until late September – at the earliest.

At this time, it remains unclear whether or not the State would seek to implement the Law for the November election if it ultimately obtains a successful ruling. It is clear, however, that this date is too late for the Law to be put into effect in a fair, non-discriminatory manner. We will continue to do everything in our power to fight against the Law.

The League is represented by the Brennan Center for Justice, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, and pro bono by the law firms Sullivan & Cromwell LLP and Derfner, Altman & Wilborn LLC.

Letters from South Carolina to the DOJ, from DOJ to South Carolina, and from the Brennan Center to the DOJ are available at http://www.brennancenter.org/content/resource/south_carolina_v_holder/.

League Leaders Make News

*Mary Deku is honored
as 2012 Upstate Black History Maker*

Mary Ann Washington Deku, immediate past LWV/Spartanburg County President, was named as one of the 107.3 JAMZ 2012 Upstate Black History Makers during February. She was recognized on radio by the station on February 19 throughout the day and listed on the station's website. She brought much enthusiasm and compassion to all of her undertakings in the community over the years. Mary has positively affected the lives of thousands of students and families and continues to do so even though she is a retired school counselor. She has directly helped adults without housing and income to overcome obstacles via various resources and lending constant assistance to them. She also served as a foster parent for ten years.

As LWV/Spartanburg County president for the past 3 years, the League received \$18,000 in grants due to her efforts and those of energetic League chairs, Helen Bennett and Linda Bilanchone.

Mary was one of the first Trail Blazer award recipients recognized by the New Trinity Baptist Church in Wellford, SC, during Black History Month 2011. She is an active and lifetime member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as well as lifetime of the National Education Association and South Carolina Education Association. National, regional, state, and community awards are among her achievements from these organizations, educational groups and numerous civic and community groups.

LWV SC Voter

Post Office Box 8453
Columbia, SC 29202

The SC Voter

Summer 2012
Volume 62 Issue 1

Established in 1951, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina is a nonpartisan, political organization that encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a League member. All members receive the National Voter, the SC Voter, and a newsletter from their local League.

Co-Presidents: Barbara Zia
Peggy Brown

Editor: Laurel Suggs

Published by: *The League of Women Voters of SC*
PO Box 8453
Columbia, SC 29202
Phone & Fax:
(803) 251-2726
Website: www.lwvsc.org

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
P-A-I-D
Columbia SC
Permit #1365

IMPORTANT LEAGUE DATES:



July

28th Saturday, *LWVSC Board Retreat and Meeting*,
9:30-3:00PM, at the home of Laurel Suggs,
401 N. Trenholm Road, Columbia. *

August

7th Tuesday, *The State of the Judiciary in South Carolina:
From Research to Reality, A Public Forum* –
Reception, 6PM; Program 7PM –
University of South Carolina School of Law Auditorium,
S. Main and Greene Streets, Columbia.

26th Sunday, *Women's Equality Day*

September

Voter Registration Month

15th Saturday, *League Leaders Day*, 9:30AM-3:30PM,
St. Paul's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall,
1715 Bull Street, Columbia,
LWVSC Board will meet afterwards.*

17th Monday, *Constitution Day*

25th Tuesday, *National Voter Registration Day*,
(<http://nationalvoterregistrationday.org/about>)

October

6th Saturday, *Last Day to Register to Vote in South Carolina for
the November 2012 General Election*.

November

6th Tuesday, *General Election*, 7AM-7PM

* Any member of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina are welcome to attend LWVSC board meetings.