

League of Women Voters of South Carolina

League Leaders Update

November 2009

From Barbara Zia, President ([ziab1@comcast.net](mailto:ziab1@comcast.net); 803-251-2726)

## Voters Service/Citizen Education

It was with deep regret that the state League Board accepted the resignation of Chuck Gibbs as Vice President/Voters Service & Citizen Education. Chuck has served ably in that role and before that as Budget Chair. We will miss his service and friendship on the Board but understand that family obligations require him at home. Chuck intends to continue an active role with the LWV of Sumter County. We are in touch with the Nominating Committee and expect this important position to be filled quickly.

Know Your State. The state Board agreed to send all 85 local school superintendents a copy of *Know Your State*, accompanied by a letter of support from State Education Superintendent Rex and ordering information. We will give special pricing for bulk purchases. Leagues might consider purchasing copies to donate to local libraries and schools at the member price of \$5 per copy. There might be photo opportunities with League members presenting books to library and school officials.

Census 2010: Making S.C. Count. League efforts to ensure a fair and accurate count of the South Carolina population continue apace. Many Leagues are working with your Complete Count Committees or your local Census partnership specialists to reach out to all residents, including "Hard-to-Count" communities.

According to the state Budget and Control Board/Office of Research and Statistics, South Carolina may pick up a 7<sup>th</sup> congressional district, but 10 counties are expected to lose population. Thus getting a complete, accurate count is critical in terms of legislative representation and funding at local and state levels.

Check out the website for the Palmetto Census at <http://census.sc.gov/> - first. Rania Jamison works for the state as Census Public Information Coordinator and is eager to work with Leagues. She is a wonderfully informative and motivating speaker about the importance of the Census for our state. You can reach her at 803-734-4126 or [rania.jamison@ors.sc.gov](mailto:rania.jamison@ors.sc.gov).

Bill of Rights Day. We mark the anniversary of the signing of the Bill of Rights on December 15 with a call for civic vigilance and participation at home and a continued commitment to fostering democracy abroad. A press template is available to assist Leagues in marking this important anniversary. Download this customizable media release [here](#).

Gubernatorial Debates. LWVSC continues discussion with SCETV and SC AARP about co-sponsoring a series of primary and general election debates for candidates for governor.

Energy Conservation Project. LWVSC will partner with the South Carolina Energy Office and South Carolina State Library on a project to raise awareness about energy use and the need for conservation. Suzanne Rhodes, LWVSC Nuclear Specialist, will head up the project for the state League. Deborah Hotchkiss, LWV/Columbia Area member and head of State Library

Development, will represent the Library.

The challenge is that South Carolina's per capita energy and electricity use was approximately 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation in 2007. Most citizens have little information about the cost of their energy choices. Interested state library systems will receive the Kill-a-Watt electricity measurement tool, in addition to traditional educational materials (posters, bookmarks, tips), to enable citizens to measure and assess their electricity use. The 3-part Kill-a-Watt tool would be checked out like a DVD or book. The project will provide a list of possible speakers and topics, and a simple check-off evaluation form to determine what, if any, outcome resulted from the use of the tool.

Details about the project will be available soon. Contact Suzanne ([suzrhodes@juno.com](mailto:suzrhodes@juno.com)) if you have immediate questions or know of someone who might like to be involved.

## Study and Action

Save the Date: 2010 Legislative Advocacy Day, February 23. Once again LWVSC is co-sponsoring LAD with SC AAUW and SC School Improvement Council, with Jean Norman as coordinator. An exciting program is planned on the theme of the impact of health and the environment impact on the school achievement of South Carolina's children. Though presenters are being finalized at this time, camera-ready information, including registration, will soon be available at <http://www.lwvsc.org/index.html>. In addition, we will do a statewide member mailing in January. Highlights of 2010 LAD and presenters to date include:

- Introduction of "State of Denial," a new film documentary produced by Bud Ferillo (of "Corridor of Shame" fame), to introduce health and environmental issues that impact student achievement and that can be addressed through state legislation and policy.
- Environmental impact--Nancy Vinson, Coastal Conservation League
- Health impact--Panel discussion moderated by Dr. Tiffany Williams, MUSC School of Nursing, Charleston. Topics include nutrition/obesity, cardio-vascular disease, teen pregnancy

2010 LWVSC Legislative Priorities. Your LWVSC Board is considering state legislative priorities on which to focus during the session that resumes January 12. If your League wants to suggest bills for support or opposition, please contact JoAnne Day at [jvday@yahoo.com](mailto:jvday@yahoo.com).

Legislative Interviews. The annual state legislator questionnaire will soon be emailed to local League presidents and Member-at-Large Unit chairs. Many thanks in advance for your help in interviewing your local state legislative delegation members on LWVSC priority policy issues. Please contact JoAnne Day ([jvday@yahoo.com](mailto:jvday@yahoo.com)) with questions or comments. We ask that you return the results of your interviews to LWVSC by January 15, if possible. Later submissions are also welcome. This is a great opportunity for local Leagues and legislators to get to know one another over conversations on policy issues. Legislators really do value the opinion of League members, especially when they are constituents.

Advocacy Team. LWVSC Advocacy Chair JoAnne Day is available to talk with you and your members about being part of the League advocacy team. She will even conduct a mini-

advocacy workshop for you. To learn more, please contact JoAnne at 803-920-7094 or [jvday@yahoo.com](mailto:jvday@yahoo.com).

2010 Program Planning. We hope you will devote a member meeting in January or February to planning the study and action that your local League will undertake in the coming year and that you want LWVUS to tackle in 2010-2012. You can find complete LWVUS program planning materials [here](#). Deadline for electronic reporting of your local League results on national program is March 1.

Program planning at the grassroots level is a unique LWV feature. As you know, the League does not take action on any issue unless we have a position at the national, state or local level. League program consists of governmental issues chosen for study and action, and includes both adopted positions upon which action is taken and issues for study that leads to a positions and action. This is a chance for League members to voice their opinions as to those issues and positions that warrant study or action, in priority order. Once a position is reached, action by Leagues consists of lobbying and advocating in support of a position. We undertake program planning in our local Leagues each year. Since 2010 is an even-numbered year, local Leagues will review LWVUS positions as well as their local positions. (LWVSC positions are reviewed in odd-numbered years.)

Leagues can organize program planning around a fun social event for members. For example, LWV/Charleston Area holds a Pizza and Program meeting where members socialize over pizza, and then plan League issues and action. A potluck supper is another popular format for program planning.

Local and state Leagues are advocating for study and action projects they want Leagues to consider during the program planning process, in the hopes of getting adoption at national Convention. Following are projects about which I have been contacted as LWVSC president:

- Adoption of a LWVUS study of a cabinet-level department of peace at the federal level (Proposed by the LWV of Columbia/Boone County (MO). Contact: [elaineblodgett@mchsi.com](mailto:elaineblodgett@mchsi.com)).
- Adoption of a LWVUS study of the role of the federal government in education (Proposed by LWV of Palo Alto (CA) and other California LWVs. Contact Doris Peterson at [petersendoris@earthlink.net](mailto:petersendoris@earthlink.net) to receive a copy of the proposal or with questions.)
- Adoption of a LWVUS resolution on election integrity to add "transparency" as a principal pillar in the LWVUS Resolution on Election Systems. In 2004 the LWVUS adopted the SARA Resolution--Secure, Accurate, Recountable and Accessible--as LWV guiding principles on election systems. Election transparency means full public access to all election procedures in order to allow meaningful verification of ballot handling, tabulating, auditing and related election records. (Proposed by LWV of Monterey Peninsula. Contact: Beverly Bean at [beverlygb@gmail.com](mailto:beverlygb@gmail.com))

LWV of the Clemson Area wants to propose a study of Nuclear Waste Reprocessing. Contact Eleanor Hare at [eleanorhare@gmail.com](mailto:eleanorhare@gmail.com) for details.

Election Reform. LWVSC continues our laser focus on stopping voter photo ID (H3418) and supporting real election reform like early voting. I recently served on a panel at the S.C.

Legislative Black Caucus in McCormick on voting issues. In my remarks I stressed that South Carolina should enact election laws and procedures that simplify and speed up the voting process for all voters and urged legislators to remain steadfast in opposing H3418 and to support a separate early voting bill, based on North Carolina's effective legislation.

Criminal Justice is one of the League's action priorities in South Carolina. CJ Director Robin Kimbrough-Melton is willing to work with Leagues to convene community forums with local Leagues as the hosts to educate communities about proposed legislation, the work of the Sentencing Reform Commission and related issues. Contact Robin for more information at [RKIMBRO@clermson.edu](mailto:RKIMBRO@clermson.edu).

## **Membership & Organization**

Membership Recruitment Initiative: Coming to SC. The state League Board agreed to participate as a state in the LWVUS Membership Recruitment Initiative. LWVUS will conduct a training for members who would be state coaches in March 2010 (to include SC and several other states in the region). They are also building some modules to help go beyond visibility and membership to include mentoring League leaders in order to build a stronger leadership pool. Attendees from the state and local Leagues will learn about the fundamentals of the recruitment effort (including successful tools to increase membership), and Leagues will create a plan for growth. The Membership Recruitment Initiative is funded by the LWVUS Leaders for Leadership Fund.

The opportunity to participate in the MRI has been requested often by League leaders in South Carolina, especially after seeing LWV of Spartanburg County's positive results with the program. If your League would like to take part, please contact Janie Shipley at [janrel@mindspring.com](mailto:janrel@mindspring.com) or me at [ziab1@comcast.net](mailto:ziab1@comcast.net)

Meeting on a Disk. Looking for a no-fuss, ready-made member meeting? DVDs are available from the LWVSC Energy Forum held at Francis Marion University and Hodding Carter's talk on campaign finance reform at Furman University this fall. Please contact me if you would like to borrow a disk ([ziab1@comcast.net](mailto:ziab1@comcast.net)).

ETV radio has scheduled a podcast of the audio of Hodding Carter's address on December 14, 3:30 p.m. The address will be available at [www.scetv.org/speakingofschools](http://www.scetv.org/speakingofschools) and will then be archived. Thanks to the Riley Institute and ETV for making this available.

Member Roster Updates are due in the LWVUS Online System January 31. With the January 31st reporting deadline approaching, please note the importance of updating your member database in the LWVUS online database. This includes entering new members, changing expire dates, and marking lapsed members as "inactive." Unless their information is in the database, members will not receive the National Voter, League-Voice, SC VOTER and other LWVSC communications – all critical engagement tools. If you are unfamiliar with the online database, a user's guide is available [here](#) (then click on the "Online Roster Quick Reference Guide" link on the right side of the page). LWVUS staff member Betty Taira, [btaira@lww.org](mailto:btaira@lww.org), is also available Monday-Wednesday to answer questions and provide training on how to use the online roster system. Laurel Suggs ([lsuggs@imgsc.com](mailto:lsuggs@imgsc.com)) and Janie Shipley ([janrel@mindspring.com](mailto:janrel@mindspring.com)) are also available to help you.

Save the Date: 2010 LWVSC Council, April 24, Columbia. Enjoy a splendid Saturday of League business, friends, fun and grassroots participatory democracy at its best. Details will follow in January.

National Convention 2010. The first call to Convention 2010 has gone out, and now you can [register](#) for Convention 2010 at the [LWVUS Convention Page](#). Remember that the 2010 National Convention will be held in Atlanta on June 11-15. You can start discussing Convention and Program Planning with other League leaders by joining the Convention list. (Subscription information can be found after you log in at <https://member.lwv.org/member.asp>.) Under consideration for Convention is a caucus on environmental issues related to the southeastern states. Suggested topics are coal-fired power plants and water issues. LWVSC would be taking a leading role in organizing the caucus. Please contact Peggy Brown at [PBrown@mcleodhealth.org](mailto:PBrown@mcleodhealth.org) if your League is interested in being involved or in suggesting environmental issues of shared concern with Leagues from other southeastern states.

Last but not least, the next LWVSC Board meeting will be Saturday, January 23, 10-3:00, 1600 St. Julian Place, Columbia. And the Winter SC VOTER mailing will be January 15.