

League of Women Voters of South Carolina

League Leaders Update

June 2010

From Barbara Zia, President

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Hello, South Carolina League Leaders. As the hot, hazy days of summer settle in, many of us are heading to the mountains, beaches, or a porch with a cool breeze, glass of tea and a good book. Still, the work of the League goes on.

Following are updates from the LWVSC board and beyond. Please share this information with your leadership team. I look forward to seeing you at League Leaders Day on August 21. And thanks for all you do for the League and our state.

LWVSC CALENDAR

June 11-15, LWVUS Convention, Atlanta, Georgia

July 15th, LWVUS & LWVSC Per Member Payment due

July 15th, Summer SC VOTER mailing

July 17-18, Membership Initiative training for local Leagues, The Inn at USC, Columbia.

July 23rd-24th, Friday evening and all day Saturday, LWVSC Board Retreat, Peggy Appler's Edisto River house.

August 21st, Saturday, League Leaders Day, 9 a.m., Registration; 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Program, St. Paul's Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1715 Bull St., Columbia. Brief LWVSC Board meeting follows at 3:30.

August 26th, Thursday, Women's Equality Day

September is Voter Registration Month

September 17th, Constitution Day

September 30th, Fall SC VOTER material deadline

MEMBERSHIP AND TRAINING

League Leaders Day, August 21--Mark your calendars and tell your members about League Leaders Day on August 21 in Columbia. The LWVSC board is working hard to plan a fun and educational event. We look forward to seeing you there. Highlights include networking opportunities and workshops on: how to get your message to the media; League nonpartisanship and why it matters; moderator training for candidate forums; and the new League project on a fair judiciary; how grow your League in numbers and strength. Details will follow via email and the Summer SC VOTER.

Leadership Changes--Please send me your new list of local League officers and directors, including their contact information (postal address and preferred phone number and email address), as soon after annual meeting as possible. We want to make sure that leadership teams for all of our local Leagues and MAL Units are included in the 2010-2011 LWVSC Leaders Directory which will be printed this summer and distributed at League Leaders Day.

Database Update for Your League's Leaders--Please enter your League's leadership changes in the LWVUS Online System--<https://member.lwv.org/Login.asp>

To access your local League information, you'll need your League's user id and password. Attached you'll find instructions for working with the LWVUS online database. You

will want to save this important information and share with your membership chair or whoever maintains your member database. You can also access the Online Roster Reference Guide at <http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=OnlineRoster&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=110&ContentID=9533>

Need assistance accessing your League's user id and password or with the online system? Contact:

Betty Taira in the LWVUS office in Washington, DC, at 202-429-1965

or btaira@lwv.org

Janie Shipley, LWVSC Member Services VP, is available to assist you at 864-885-1967

or janrel@mindspring.com

Laurel Suggs (lsuggs@imgsc.com) and I are happy to answer any questions or walk you through the process.

State League Speakers Bureau--Whatever the policy or organizational topic, chances are there is someone in a state LWV leadership role who can speak to it or direct you to the right resources. Please let me or anyone else on the state board know how we can address an interest or need. Remember that we can organize advocacy training workshops for your group. Contact Peggy Appler for information (843-688-5171 or dappler@homesc.com).

Board Training Opportunities. When the dust settles from Annual Meeting, get your League's year off to a flying start with a training and planning session for the new board. Peggy Appler, LWVSC Community Relations VP, is happy to discuss formats and will even visit your League to conduct the activity. Contact Peggy at 843-688-5171 or dappler@homesc.com.

Membership Initiative. Work on the LWVUS/LWVSC Membership Initiative continues at an exciting pace. Project Coordinator Janie Shipley and State Coaches Rebecca Lambert (LWV/Greenville County), Sue Myers (LWV/Georgetown County), and Joyce Franklin (LWV/Darlington County) will be announcing which local South Carolina Leagues have been selected to participate in the first wave of the membership initiative, cosponsored by LWVUS and LWVSC. Statewide training for selected local Leagues will take place with state and national League coaches in Columbia on July 17-18. We are all thrilled about this "Getting to Great" opportunity for the League in South Carolina.

Contact Janie Shipley with any questions (864.885.1967 or janrel@mindspring.com).

VOTERS SERVICE AND CITIZEN EDUCATION

Promoting an Independent and Diverse Judiciary in South Carolina. The League of South Carolina was recently selected by LWVUS to participate in its citizen education project: A Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary. There will be an information sharing opportunity at Convention for delegates from South Carolina and Kansas (which is completing its first year in the project). Zaida Arguedas and David Ward, project coordinators, will facilitate the meeting. The goal is to have the project leaders from Kansas share their experiences in working on a state-wide campaign with members of the League of South Carolina who are interested in leading the initiative in their state. This should be a candid exchange of information about the pros and cons of this type of effort and a productive meeting for both Leagues.

The League's project in Kansas has had many terrific achievements, including receiving formal support from the Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court, large turnouts

at local forums, key opinion-editorial pieces in the local media, a featured article in the American Judicature Society's Judicature March/April issue, and overall working in together Kansas Leagues have achieved great visibility.

The South Carolina project is just getting started, but there will be opportunities and resources available for local Leagues who wish to participate. Convention delegates will report back to their local Leagues. If your League won't be represented at Convention we'll make sure you get the information. In addition, we will have a session at League Leaders Day devoted to the project and how your League can be involved.

Election Season! 2010 is an important election year in South Carolina, and no group is busier than the LWV--registering and educating voters about candidates and issues, and getting out the vote on Election Day. Local Leagues are holding voter registration drives and candidate forums in advance of the state primary election. Here's a link to a story about LWV/Clemson Area's highly successful 3rd Congressional District debate, organized by Reggie Turetsky and moderated by Donna London--

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/2010/jun/03/congressional-3rd-district-candidates-speak-forum/>.

Got questions about voters service matters? Please contact Laurel Suggs, LWVSC Voters Service VP (803-799-7050; lsuggs@imgsc.com) or Barbara Zia (803-251-2726; ziab1@comcast.net).

Primary Runoff Debates for Governor. In the event that a gubernatorial primary runoff election is required for either party, the LWVSC, AARP South Carolina and WIS News 10 in Columbia plan to sponsor televised live debates for candidates: on June 16 for Democrats, and on June 17 for Republicans. The debates would take place and air from the WIS studio from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. There would be no live audiences. They would possibly be streamed on-line as well. WIS would re-air the debates on June 20.

Registering new citizens to vote. Keller Barron follows immigration issues for LWVSC. She has been in touch with the Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services regarding League involvement in registering new citizens to vote at South Carolina naturalization ceremonies. Keller will contact local Leagues with information when naturalization ceremonies are being held in their communities so that they can organize voter registration tables. "Engaging New Citizens as New Voters" is a useful LWVUS primer on promoting voter registration among new U.S. citizens. Copies can be ordered from LWVUS at <http://store.lwv.org/detail.aspx?ID=47>. Keller can be reached at 803-771-4458 or kellerhb@att.net.

Making Every Vote Count: Reach-A-Teacher Voter Registration Project. Information about organizing voter registration drives in school communities is available from Laurel Suggs (803-799-7050; lsuggs@imgsc.com) and at www.lwvsc.org/voter_information.html. Attendees at LWVSC Council in April heard Laurel's excellent presentation about the project. Rachel Dean, with RISESC is also available as a resource (803-743-5164; RISESC@gmail.com).

Counting on You: Vote 2010! LWV/Charleston Area is partnering with community groups in

an outreach effort to engage more citizens in the voting process. Businesses, schools, churches, hospitals, and community organizations are asked to join in the campaign by offering the opportunity for employees, staff, or members to register to vote -- during lunch hours, at a monthly meeting, even before or after church. Research shows that the most effective method of engaging someone in the voting process is peer to peer contact; this is a collaborative endeavor to do so. Check it out at <http://charleston.sc.lwv.org/Vote2010.html>. Local Leagues are welcome to utilize the project in their communities and can add the link to their websites. Questions? Contact Joan Dehne, LWV/Charleston Area Voters Service Director, at 843-971-6230 or joan@dehne.com.

ISSUES AND ACTION

The South Carolina General Assembly session closed with a weak whimper this week, and citizens from the Lowcountry to the Upstate could be heard breathing a collective sigh of relief. But it's not over yet--Legislators return later in June to deal with gubernatorial vetoes and voter photo ID which passed in a conference committee vote near midnight as the session ended. The Governor may issue a single veto, shooting down the entire budget as he did once in the past, and force both sides to come to the table to rework the entire budget to his liking; or he may veto the budget in a piecemeal fashion. The sine die resolution, which sets the calendar and agenda for when the legislature returns to Columbia to deal with expected gubernatorial budget vetoes, was expanded to include tackling a separate conference committee report regarding a bill that would require a 24-hour waiting period for women seeking an abortion after they've seen an ultrasound of the fetus.

Be sure to contact members of your legislative delegation, thanking them for their service and action in support of League positions--Encourage them to "do right" when they return. This was a challenging session for government officials and citizens alike. The Summer SC VOTER will have a legislative update on LWVSC priority issues.

State League studies are underway on:

1. school district structure and authority--Chair, Holley Ulbrich (864-654-6828; holleyu@nctv.com)
2. water quantity issues in South Carolina--Co-Chairs, Joan Kinne--Shulman (843-842-9246; RJShulman@hargray.com) and Mullen Taylor (803-917-9931; Mullen.Taylor@mgclaw.com)

Both study committees will be sending consensus questions to local Leagues in December 2010 for their consideration during local League program planning meetings. Based on member input and decision at LWVSC Convention in Spring 2011, new positions will be adopted and added to our state League program. We urge local Leagues to hold educational meetings on study issues for their members and the public in Fall 2010. Please contact the study chairs for information about speakers--both from the committees and local community experts.

These studies offer exciting opportunities for the League to make a difference in public policy in South Carolina and for local Leagues to grow their membership around issues that matter to citizens.

