



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

SC Voter

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

Website: www.lwvsc.org

Volume 60, Issue 4

Spring 2011

LWVSC invites you to celebrate the League of South Carolina at its 30th Biennial Convention



EMPOWERED FOR ACTION: *Staying True to Our Mission for 60 Years*

In 2011, the LWVSC observes the 60th anniversary of our official recognition by the national League. We hope you will attend **LWVSC Convention** for an exciting weekend of celebration, learning, growing and connecting. All Convention events will take place at the **Quality Inn Hotel, 2390 Broad St., Sumter, on Saturday May 14, and Sunday May 15.** Sumter is a special place in South Carolina's PeeDee region.

Join us and help chart the League's future in South Carolina – And enjoy a spring weekend with Leaguers from across the state. Our host, LWV of Sumter County, is planning an outstanding experience for us. We offer fun events, top-notch speakers, instructive workshops, caucus discussions of hot topics, exciting items for sale in our wares market, and networking opportunities for everyone. In addition to voting on our issues for emphasis and studies, delegates also pass our budget, elect the board, pass resolutions, and give advice to the new board.

Any South Carolina LWV member is welcome to attend. This is a great opportunity for experienced and emerging

leaders to take part in the training and networking opportunities that Convention offers. Non-members are welcome to attend all or part of Convention as observers.

You won't want to miss any of the great workshops and other convention activities but let's face it: There's a lot of sitting during any convention. Take some time to stretch your legs at Sumter's wonderful **Swan Lake Iris Gardens**, a short ride from the hotel. This blackwater lake is home to thousands of blooming irises in the spring and several species of waterfowl, including magnificent swans. It is free to the public so build in some time to visit there.

Before and after the convention, enjoy a scenic drive through the PeeDee's agricultural countryside. Stop at the Bishopville garden where master topiary artist Pearl Fryar maintains acres of intricate topiary, and McLeod Farms near McBee for local produce.

Convention Materials

A registration form is in this issue. Please register by May 4 to allow for

preparation of Convention materials.

Convention details, including each day's schedule and reports (Nominating Committee, Bylaws, Budget and Program of Study and Action) can be obtained by calling 803.251.2726 or at <http://lwvsc.org/whatsnew.html>.

BIENNIAL CONVENTION: *continued on page 3*

Highlights:

- 30th Biennial Convention 1
- President's Perspectives 2
- Biennial Convention Registration 3
- Legislative Advocacy Day 4
- Lobbying for the Environment..... 5
- Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice 6
- ABC Recycling Bill..... 6
- Drawing the Lines 7
- School Vouchers 8
- State Budget Update 8
- Can S.C. Learn from Japan?..... 9
- O'Connor Award 9
- S.C. Voting Machines..... 10
- Important League Dates..... 11

Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!





Barbara Zia
President, LWVSC

Volumes have been written on leadership – from what it means to how to cultivate great leaders. No one captures it better than Rosalynn Carter: “A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don’t necessarily want to go, but ought to be.” In a democracy like ours – one committed to full access to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship – great leaders guide us toward fulfilling that ideal.

Great leadership combines inspiration, vision, dedication, courage and perspiration. This is true in any type organization – governmental, corporate or non-profit like the League of Women Voters. In his bestseller “Good to Great” Jim Collins identifies universal distinguishing leadership characteristics that can take organizations from being “good enough” to superior. Collins’s “Level 5” leaders possess professional will, passion for the organization and to produce sustained results, and personal humility; they set up their successors for even greater success; they are plow horses, not show horses. I would add that great leaders model principled, ethical behavior that inspires others. They “do right” even when being pulled in another direction.

Leaders are made, not born. Collins thinks potential Level 5 leaders exist all around us. It’s unlikely that anyone realized that a young Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Dwight Eisenhower or

President’s Perspectives:

Rosa Parks would rise to greatness. Sometimes a transformative experience triggers great leadership – like Eisenhower’s being picked to lead the allied forces, or Parks’ refusal to move to the back of the bus one more time. Often it’s a realization that confronting a challenge can’t wait for someone else – They pick us, not the other way around. But it takes courage to lead in the face of strong resistance.

Former South Carolina Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney, Jr., a Spirit of Democracy honoree at the 2011 LWVSC Convention, embodies that courageous leadership. On graduation from SC State College’s School of Law in 1954, Justice Finney found it difficult to earn a living from legal work, so supplemented his salary by teaching school and waiting tables. Ironically, he attended his first meeting of the SC Bar as a waiter. (At that time, blacks were denied membership in the state Bar.) In 1960, Justice Finney devoted himself to the full-time practice of law. He defended more than 6000 clients who were arrested for participating in sit-ins, freedom rides and demonstrations. Because the legal system in South Carolina protected segregation, he lost almost every case that went to trial, but won all but two on appeal. In 1994, the state legislature elected Ernest Finney to the position of Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, making him the first African-American Chief Justice of South Carolina since Reconstruction.

In 2011 the League in South Carolina commemorates the 60th year since our official recognition by LWVUS. Great leaders have always stepped forward in times of challenge. Betty Wiggins, whose story you will read about in this issue, was just such a state League leader. In celebration of our anniversary, LWVSC has launched the Past Presidents Oral Histories Project. Committee members Keller Barron, Betsy Oakman, Lucille Mould and Sej Harman are doing oral interviews of state League presidents since 1976. These oral histories will be archived in the Modern Political

Collections at the University of South Carolina and used in updating the state League’s *Proud Heritage*, initially published in 1976. The League’s story in South Carolina is replete with examples of strong, resolute, passionate leaders who refused to back down or compromise on the League’s democratic principles.

At Convention we will honor two League leaders with Spirit of Democracy awards. Sarah Leverette broke historic ground by graduating from USC School of Law in 1943, when women had few career opportunities in the field of law. Over several decades she has engaged in leadership roles in the League and in women’s professional organizations, inspiring new generations of leaders to take up the fight for equal justice and good government. Mary Ann Deku, current LWV of Spartanburg County president, exemplifies the spirit of democracy that the award represents. As a public school educator and a volunteer community activist, Mary has dedicated herself to engaging citizens in our democracy – registering voters, teaching civics classes, leading the local 2010 Census committee, ensuring that League observers are at every governmental body meeting, and making the League a presence wherever Spartanburg County citizens gather.

The sustainability of any organization, including the League, depends on its ability to grow and to cultivate leaders. For our Convention in May, we are planning an interactive, solutions-oriented workshop devoted to membership and leadership issues. I invite you to join the conversation. During this season of local League annual meetings and state convention, I hope you will step up to a leadership role, whether big or small. Our ability to maintain the vitality of the League and continue our mission of civic engagement in our state and communities for the next 60 years depends on it.

BIENNIAL CONVENTION

continued from page 1 –

Convention Venue and Accommodations

All sessions will be held at the **Sumter Quality Inn Hotel**, conveniently located and close to points of interest like Swan Lake Iris Gardens, University of South Carolina Sumter, Morris College, Shaw Air Force Base, and Sumter County Museum.

For hotel reservations please call the Quality Inn directly at 803-469-9001. Indicate you are with the League of Women Voters Convention Group and request your accommodations. The LWV rate is: \$61.00, plus tax, for single or double rooms. Free amenities include: parking, continental breakfast, wireless Internet, local calls, refrigerator and microwave, pool, exercise room.

Food service will be provided by New Beginning, a renowned Sumter caterer who will treat us to local cuisine.

Convention Highlights:

We will be offering many dynamic speakers, presentations, workshops and caucuses on topics such as:

- ▶ How to engage members and grow leaders – Strategies that work
- ▶ League study and action priorities
- ▶ A fair and impartial state judiciary
- ▶ Educating children to be active citizens – Civics in South Carolina public schools
- ▶ Proposed concurrences
- ▶ Transparency in managing state revenue to ensure funding for League priorities

We will present **Spirit of Democracy Awards** to South Carolinians who have made significant contributions to the active and informed participation of citizens in their government, and who demonstrate a commitment to democracy and democratic processes in South Carolina. Recipients of this convention’s Spirit of Democracy Awards are:

- **Supreme Court Chief Justice Ernest A. Finney, Jr., retired** – South Carolina’s first African-American Supreme Court justice since Reconstruction, is being honored for his commitment to advancing racial justice and to a fair and impartial state judiciary.

- **Sarah Leverette** – One of South Carolina’s first women lawyers is being honored for more than 50 years of inspiring leadership in the League of Women Voters and for her advocacy on behalf of a diverse and independent state judiciary.
- **Mary Ann Deku** – An exemplary LWV of Spartanburg County president, her name has been synonymous with voter registration and outreach since the 1970s in Spartanburg.

A **Membership Growth Award** will be given to the local League with the greatest increase in membership since Convention 2009.

The **Saturday Evening Banquet and Pre-Banquet Reception** will be held at the Sumter Quality Inn. The banquet features guest speaker Ruth A. McGregor, former Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court and presentation of the Spirit of Democracy award to Justice Finney. The reception with wine and hors d’oeuvres is at 6 p.m., followed by the banquet at 7:00.

LWVSC CONVENTION 2011 REGISTRATION FORM

May 14-15, 2011 • Sumter Quality Inn Hotel, 2390 Broad St., Sumter, SC 29150

LEAGUE NAME: _____

DELEGATES: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

NON-DELEGATES/OBSERVERS: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Photocopy form for additional registrations.

- Full Registration Fee (2 days) – \$75 per person*
- Saturday or Sunday ONLY Registration Fee (includes activities, lunch) – \$35 per day
- Saturday banquet only – \$25 * Luncheon per day – \$20 * Please indicate vegetarian meal requests.
- **Registration is due by May 4.** \$25 late fee for registrations received after May 4.
- Registration fees are the same for delegates and non-delegates. • Payment is due at registration.

Contact information for person making reservation:

Name: _____

Postal Address: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

**Full registration fee includes: meals as scheduled, including banquet, lunches, continental breakfast; plenary sessions; presentations; training opportunities; materials.*

	NUMBER:	TOTAL:
FULL REGISTRATION	_____ x \$75	_____
ONE DAY REGISTRATION	_____ x \$35	_____
SATURDAY BANQUET ONLY	_____ x \$25	_____
LUNCH (PER DAY)	_____ x \$20	_____

- Please mail with payment to **LWVSC Treasurer, 119 Tant St., Clemson, SC 29631.**
- Cancellation refund requests must be received by **May 4.**
- For hotel reservations please contact **803-469-9001.** Daily double room rate: **\$61** (plus tax).



Legislative Advocacy Day: Coming Together for South Carolina's Future, Our Children

By Rita G. Paul, LWVSC Director, Early Care and Education/Child Welfare

On February 23 just over 400 women and men gathered at Epworth Children's Home for Legislative Advocacy Day (LAD) 2011!

A planning group began meeting months prior to February to determine the focus and extent of LAD. As a result, this year the LWVSC expanded our partnership to include the United Methodist Women, along with our past partners the SC School Improvement Council and American Association of University Women of SC. The format of the day included meetings with legislators at the Statehouse, tours of the Statehouse and workshops at Epworth. We begin by sharing League developed talking points as well as "leave behind" information for those meeting with legislators. Over 200 participants made the trip to the Statehouse and shared valuable information with legislators and staff regarding the shared positions of each of our groups around education and child welfare. Simultaneous workshops continued at Epworth centering on legislative issues, training for citizen advocates, and learning about Epworth – its children and history.

After a working lunch that included famed *Epworth Peanut Butter Ice Cream*, participants heard from Epworth President, Rev. John Holler, with critical statistics on childcare and child welfare in our state. Rev. Holler's presentation



Leaders from 4 LAD partnering organizations addressed the need to invest in the state's children at a Statehouse press conference. Left to right: Cassie Barber, SC School Improvement Council Exec. Dir.; Barbara Zia, LWVSC Pres.; Patricia Batten, AAUW SC Pres.; Linda Durant, SC Conference United Methodist Women President.

preceded a rousing session with Dr. Mike Fanning, Director of Olde English Consortium, on comprehensive tax reform, followed by a presentation on the status of SC's education funding by CFO Bob Davis, Richland School District 2.

We had visits in the afternoon from several state legislators, including Sen. Vincent Sheheen, Rep. Paul Agnew, Rep. Bruce Bannister, Rep. Chandra Dillard, all

expressing their appreciation for our work and dedication to children's issues.

Follow up conversations indicate the need to determine the timing of LAD in the future as well as best practice approaches to creating more advocacy locally that lends itself to developing relationships with legislators across the



Citizen advocates listen intently to speakers at LAD press conference at Statehouse.



state. While there are decisions to be made and discussions to continue with regard to the focus and magnitude of LAD going forward, all in all, it was truly a ground-breaking day – *to have so many focused on such important issues at the same place at the same time!*

Betty Wiggins - *A Tribute*

By Sheila M. Haney, PhD, past LWVSC President, LWV of Darlington County founder

Born and reared in Hartsville, Elizabeth McArn Campbell Wiggins ("Betty") attended public schools and graduated from Agnes Scott College. Marrying Joseph Wiggins from a prominent city family in 1948, they would have a son Lawton, and share their mutual interest in preservation of the environment for a lifetime. As I dropped League information into her back door open box, I always took a minute to appreciate her kitchen and flower gardens. Since the Wiggins lived on a main city artery, a front yard corner was always planted to catch your eye. Betty was long part of the Hartsville tree advisory committee. She had always enjoyed outdoor sports (swimming, skiing, etc.) and even formed a womens group to enjoy these activities together. Throughout her adult life, she was a faithful member of the city's Episcopal Church.

Betty, a lovely, dedicated, competent woman, was involved in the League of Women Voters much of her adulthood. Not only had she maintained her membership until her death but she was also a charter member when Hartsville's first local League was created in 1952. Betty served on the state Board in 1957 as Voters Service chair, and was appointed by the members in 1960 to serve as president in 1960-1961 completing a

predecessor's term. Two days later, after a smooth transition to the presidency, Betty gave the state League's position on water policy in Columbia to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Water Resources and was complimented by that entity.

An early state League history quoted her remarks at the close of the 1961 state League Convention as she addressed the delegates:

So we haven't gotten a new Constitution or women on juries. But I'm sure many more people have been exposed to both subjects and made aware of the problems involved. Meanwhile, we have acquired more political know-how; more knowledge as to the possibilities of getting legislative action. This groundwork and background may yet pay off – Let's not lose sight of why we want to strengthen our Leagues and expand the S.C. League: not just to get specific local and state legislation passed – but because our main aim is to stimulate an awareness of the individual's responsibility in government – That is quite a goal to attain, but let's not underestimate the value of results achieved while striving towards it.



When the local League was again active in 1991, Betty continued her membership and participated in a number of projects. In 2005, when Hartsville hosted the state League convention, Betty was honored for her service before 50-some state delegates. I recognized the obituary photo was mine taken in her kitchen after she had changed into her lovely green velvet robe. She has already been missed by the LWV of Darlington County. Thank you, Betty, for your example.

Lobbying for the Environment

By Brusi Alexander, LWVSC Co-Director, Natural Resources

The League of Women Voters had an excellent, enthusiastic Conservation Lobby Day at the Statehouse on February 15th. We were updated beforehand on the latest action priorities by South Carolina Conservation Voters' Debbie Parker. Many of us also attended a standing-room-only subcommittee meeting in the afternoon.

The main bills we promoted were the Phosphorus Bill (H.3617). We had good interaction with representatives we had targeted, and even got a commitment from Rep. Nathan Ballentine to be a co-sponsor.

The House Agriculture and Natural Resources Subcommittee discussed both of these priority bills and heard testimony.

The Subcommittee had a positive response and ultimately voted Rep. Mike Pitts' Phosphorus Bill, H.3470, out of Subcommittee with a favorable report. H.3470 would prohibit the use, sale or manufacture of dishwashing detergents containing phosphates, a harmful chemical found in lakes and rivers. Phosphorus is already banned in 15 states because it kills fish and lowers recreational revenues and home values.

After much discussion, the Three Strikes Bill was carried over for further consideration at the next Subcommittee meeting to allow stakeholders time for negotiations. H.3617 would require any utility with three spills over 5,000 gallons

in a 12-month period to undergo a comprehensive audit of what caused the spill and fix the problems identified. The conservation community continues to work with the wastewater utility industry to craft a bill that treats all utilities fairly and helps chronic violators come into compliance. A great need exists to have some safeguards for the public and our waterways on this issue.

In attendance at the LWV's Lobby Day were Sheila C. Gallagher, Carol Kososki, Ryan Nevius, Peggy Brown, Rev. May M. Finklea, Becky Carr, Pam Greenlaw, Ann Jennings, Ivey Kaiser, Caitlyn Ruble, Karen Crane and Brusi Alexander.

Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice

By Robin Kimbrough-Melton, JD, LWVSC Director, Criminal/Juvenile Justice

Merger of Corrections and Parole agencies proposed

Following the enactment of comprehensive sentencing reform last year, the General Assembly is considering legislation (H.3267) to merge the Department of Corrections and the Department of Probation, Parole and Pardons. The proposal is intended to facilitate the implementation of sentencing reform by shifting non-violent offenders, like drug users, from the prisons to intensive community

supervision. Over the long term, the proposal is expected to save money by eliminating duplicative staff positions and avoiding the need to build more prisons.

Report: About half of state's children live in poverty

In its first annual report since the early 1990s, the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children presented an increasingly dismal picture for children in South Carolina that is likely to worsen with the economic crisis. The report

documents a series of threats to children's well-being, including rising poverty, increasing unemployment, home foreclosures and loss of health insurance. The report is available at:

<http://childlaw.sc.edu/JointCommittee.asp>.

The Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee was recently refunded after a long period of dormancy. The bipartisan joint committee, which consists of six appointed legislators, three appointed citizens and six state agency officials, has endorsed several pieces of legislation designed to improve the juvenile justice system.

Alcoholic Beverage Container (ABC) Recycling Bill S.461 Moves to Full Senate

By Peggy Brown, LWVSC Co-Director, Natural Resources

Many thanks to the Leaguers who responded to the action alert and contacted their senators on the Judiciary Committee in mid-March. Once again it proves that contact from constituents pays off. S.461 passed with a 12-9 vote. Senators voting for the bill were Paul Campbell, Ray Cleary, Creighton Coleman, Robert Ford, Brad Hutto, Gerald Malloy, Larry Martin, Shane Martin, Floyd Nicholson, Mike Rose, John Scott and Vincent Sheheen. Special thanks go to Sens. Cleary and Campbell for their in-depth explanation and defense of the bill during the Committee hearing. Please take this opportunity to thank Committee Senators for their support, while asking them to continue to support S.461, as the bill will make a positive impact on our state's economy.

Currently South Carolina recycles approximately 22% of its waste, far below the state goal of 35%. In 2009 an estimated 400,000 tons of recyclable material went to landfills, while it cost taxpayers over \$15 million to dispose of recyclables (based on \$35 tipping fee).

The Clemson University Jim Self Center's *Recycling Industries Strategic Plan for 2010* points out that recycling offers alternatives to waste disposal that avoid disposal costs for industry and taxpayers, as well as revenue from the sale of recyclables. Recycling provides significant benefits, including material for new products made from recycled content as well as a growth projection increase of 12% for direct and indirect jobs over the next five years. Daily there are discussions and issues with landfill permitting, locations and costs for disposal and reducing the carbon footprint. The challenge is recovering the marketable material before it reaches landfills. S.461 has the capability to jumpstart our rather stagnant voluntary recycling plan.

S.461 calls for establishments that have a permit for on-site consumption of alcohol to implement a recycling program over the next two years. S.461 will create a valuable recycling presence, where the heaviest recyclable materials are generated and easiest to recover. Consider

this: All commodities (corrugated paper; glass, aluminum and plastic containers) are received or served in recyclable materials at ABC establishments. It only makes sense to begin a structured recycling program with this sector.

S.461 would require establishments to develop recycling plans guided by DHEC. Minimal funding for the bill comes from the Governor's Task Force on Litter with money going equally to DHEC and the Department of Revenue for implementation and enforcement. Permit applications or renewals would get a 10% discount for eight years if there is a recycling plan that does not include glass, and a 25% discount for applications and renewals that have a glass recycling plan. (The bill provides establishments without access to glass recyclers three years to implement glass recycling.) At the Subcommittee meeting a Texas glass-recycling executive testified that the company is profiting from recycled glass and would build a facility in South Carolina if S.461 passes. Our state can't afford to "waste" this opportunity.

Draw the Lines, South Carolina

By Suzanne Rhodes, LWVSC Co-Director, Redistricting

The Process in the State Legislature

On March 2nd the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Redistricting met for the first time, chaired by Sen. Glenn McConnell. All Subcommittee members attended: Sens. Robert Ford, Larry Martin, Bradley Hutto, Gerald Malloy, Raymond Cleary and Phillip Shoopman.

Subcommittee chief counsel Charlie Terreni, who served on Subcommittee legal staff 10 years ago, will do the technical work. Debbie Hammond is working on the website and public hearings. Senate Judiciary counsel Katherine Wells is involved with reviewing the plans and public participation.

The meeting's very scripted discussion focused on the need for transparency and public participation. Sen. McConnell reported that in 2011, compared with 2001, there is greater time pressure owing to upcoming Senate elections (and factoring in the pre-clearance process with Department of Justice). The Subcommittee initially planned eight geographically dispersed public hearings in April to come up with criteria on which to base rules & rationale for statewide plans. Sen. Hutto's proposal to add meetings to accommodate rural citizens, one each in Orangeburg and Sumter, was approved.

Technological advances in 2011 will make census data, updates and communication that might develop available on official state websites almost immediately. There are several ways to access the redistricting pages: at www.scstatehouse.gov/, go to the Senate page under 'roll call vote', or "R" on the 'citizens interest' page; and to <http://redistricting.scsenate.gov/>. The latter site has links to U.S. Department of Justice and Census Bureau.

The House, led by Judiciary Chair Jim Harrison, began its redistricting work the week of March 28.

The Numbers

Census data became public on March 24th. To no one's surprise, South Carolina has grown more urban and diverse. Hispanics had the greatest population

growth (by almost 150% to about 5% of the state population), and "other" ethnic group also grew significantly. Horry, York, Dorchester and Beaufort counties saw the greatest population increases. Visit the Census Bureau's interactive map widget at <http://lwwsc.org/Redistricting.html> to view the history of apportionment, our country's changing population since the past century, and 2010 Census data for South Carolina and other states.

YOU Can Play the Redistricting Game

U.S. Congress and S.C. General Assembly Districts. Census data allow the General Assembly to begin the redrawing of boundary lines for the state House and Senate and Congressional districts. The first step in the process is for the SC House and Senate to hold public hearings across South Carolina to gain public input. A schedule of public hearings is at <http://lwwsc.org/whatsnew.html>.

Public hearings are an opportunity to learn from each legislative body how they are proceeding with the redrawing of district lines. These hearings are also a chance for citizens to provide input about district boundaries as well. Testimony from these public hearings may be entered into the record for the courts to consider. Please try to attend hearings in your area and make public comment. Citizens are welcome to speak about why their communities should be kept together when district lines are drawn. Bring your own redistricting map – even a drugstore map with an outline drawn by a marker will do.

Points to stress with legislators:

- Current and planned districts should:
 - be fair and reflect the diversity of the state and local area;
 - include members with common interests (e.g., ethnic, racial, rural, urban, suburban, governmental boundaries such as counties, natural boundaries like rivers);
 - be drawn so as to keep communities and counties intact (Note: intact communities increase the chances of electing minorities.).

- Do not draw unusually large districts that have little in common geographically.
- Adhere to the non-retrogression standard in Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act that disallows voting changes that make minority voters "worse off" under the new system.

Local Government. Most of the public focus is on drawing lines for congressional and state legislative districts, including South Carolina's new 7th Congressional District. But as importantly, redistricting also applies to county councils, school boards and in some cases, to city or town councils and wards in municipalities that have single member districts.

Use general points above in discussions with local officials. Here are specific questions to ask regarding drawing lines for county council, city/town council and school board districts:

- What are officials' plans for redrawing district lines and how they plan to solicit public input? If councils have single member districts or wards, ask about that too.
- County councils reapportion themselves. What is time frame for county councils? When and how do they plan to solicit public input?
- District lines for school board seats will be determined in local legislation by county legislative delegations. As this likely won't happen in the 2011 legislative session, there should be time for League members and the public to draw maps, ask questions and offer input to their county delegations, individually or collectively. Single member seats should converge as much as possible around one or two high school attendance area. This is also an opportunity to raise the question of whether some at-large seats are needed to ensure adequate representation of growing areas of the county/school district between censuses.

School Vouchers . . . *Again?*

By Jon Butzon, LWVSC Director, K-12 Education

LWVSC has consistently opposed the passage of vouchers to use public monies to pay for private, including homeschool, education. We oppose vouchers in any and all of their iterations, including tax credits – and for good reason. Read on.

For the seventh year in a row, the SC General Assembly is considering a voucher bill, S.414. This bill would give tax credits to individuals to pay private school tuition and to offset the costs of home schooling, and give individuals and businesses tax credits up to the full value of taxes owed with no other limit for contribution to so-called scholarship granting organizations that pay private-school tuition for lower-income children.

There are numerous specific reasons to oppose S.414, but here are just a few to consider:

- They are **UNAFFORDABLE** – The fiscal impact statements on past voucher and tuition tax credit bills in South Carolina have ranged from more than \$84 million to \$560 million. Savings claims purported by voucher proponents have proven to be false. The reason is simple: School revenues decrease as students leave, while expenditures for fixed expenses such as heating/air conditioning, transportation and

electricity remain the same or increase with inflation. So unless enough students leave to eliminate staff (because a majority of a school's budget is tied up in personnel), expenses remain the same while per pupil revenues decrease, resulting in loss and not savings. Finally, the cost of tax credits to state's general fund will impact every other state services from health care to prisons.

- They are **UNACCOUNTABLE** – Public dollars will be used to fund private education for a select few with absolutely no public accountability of how the money is spent, the quality of schools receiving the money, or what academic achievement results they produce. Private and religious schools are not required to follow the same state and federal education accountability requirements of public schools such as content standards, annual testing, annual school report cards, or hiring highly qualified teachers.
- They are **UNPROVEN** – There is no conclusive evidence that vouchers and tuition tax credits improve student academic achievement or target the student populations they purport to help. For every study cited by voucher proponents applauding the impact of voucher/tuition tax credit programs, there is another study to say otherwise.

The issues and factors contributing to any school's low performance are complex and vary from school to school and cannot be eliminated simply through a tax credit or voucher program. And finally, the most important relevant and disturbing point is in reality, it is not the student who chooses which private school he or she will attend; it is the private school that chooses which students it wants to attend.

- And they are **UNFAIR** – Only 15% of South Carolina wage earners would qualify for the full amount of the tax credit in this bill; 72% would qualify for only half the tax credit; 41% would qualify for no tax credit. This is the tax credit for just one child. For taxpayers with two children: 94.7% don't qualify for the full credit; 85% qualify for only half; 41% qualify for no tax credit. And only the wealthiest 1.1% of taxpayers would qualify for the full tax credit for three children.

We expect our policymakers to step up and lead the state forward to a complete and competitive education for every child. We do not support a strategy like tax credits and vouchers that avoids dealing with the problems and abandons our children and public schools. Contact your legislators and tell them so.

State Budget Update

By Holley Ulbrich, PhD, LWVSC Director, State and Local Taxation

The budget process this year has been less painful than expected, but still painful. K-12 education was largely protected, but higher education took yet another budget whack in the bill approved by the House in March. Other concerns for the League are the proposals to defund for the Arts Commission and ETV/radio, both of which are important to education.

The TRAC recommendations on updating the revenue system have been largely ignored, despite the multi-organization (including LWVSC) coalition that rallied for a moral budget at the Statehouse in March. One of the points emphasized by this coalition was the need to address the revenue side of the budget.

We urge you to talk to your legislators about expanding the sales tax base by eliminating some exemptions and broadening coverage of services. These changes would help to keep sales tax revenue growth in line with growth of population and personal income.

Several bills that affect school districts and local governments still in the hopper are of concern to the League. S.310 and H.3239, both revising the Index of Taxpaying Ability (ITA) so as not to redistribute state EFA funds away from poorer districts, are on the back burner. The League supports both bills. Point of sale reassessment (H.3548) is still very contentious. This bill would eliminate the

reassessment of property to current market value when it is sold. The League opposes this bill because it shifts the tax burden to properties that are not appreciating and/or reduces local government revenue growth from property taxes, which is already slowed by Act 388. If you need talking points on either bill, check out the tax briefs on the Strom Thurmond Institute web site (www.strom.clemson.edu) under the Jim Self Center on the Future.

Keep an eye on the budget battle as it moves to the Senate and from there to the governor, who is likely to make liberal use of her line-item veto power.

Can South Carolina Learn from Japan?

By *Suzanne Rhodes, LWVSC Off-Board Director, Nuclear Energy*

After a thorough technical review, the implications for South Carolina of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami can be expected to affect spent fuel storage practices. The packing of spent fuel pools beyond their initial design capacity has been recognized as a potential problem for years, and removal of older, cooler fuel to dry casks is likely to become more widely practiced. Duke Power has a very large accumulation of spent fuel in pools and also in dry casks; Duke is likely to receive attention, and hopefully provide leadership for a national program of hardened on-site spent fuel storage – sometimes called “HOSS.”

Since 1995, the LWVUS has opposed congressional efforts to designate Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as a permanent or temporary repository for nuclear waste before studies verify site suitability and safety issues.

Boosters of the Savannah River Site have “invited” the industry to send spent

commercial nuclear fuel rods to SRS. The LWVSC has opposed this. Unless there is a site-specific safety issue, high-level waste should remain where it is generated until a suitable waste management solution is identified and demonstrated. The industry as well as the various entities that currently benefit from the nuclear industry can participate actively in finding a permanent solution.

The GE “Mark I” reactor design that failed in Japan has not been built in South Carolina. However, U.S. reactors similar to the Fukushima reactor together produce about 3% of the nation’s electricity, and safety officials assessed in 1971 that they are vulnerable. Just as reactors similar to the 1979 Three-Mile Island reactors were closed for review, these reactors could be closed for review.

The issue of likely costs of future reactor construction is finally receiving some impartial scrutiny. The only reasons the Georgia and South Carolina reactors

are proposed as “affordable” is that ratepayers are on a trajectory to pay prior to reactor construction, and federal guarantees are anticipated.

Unit 3 at the Fukushima site used Mixed Oxide (MOX) uranium/plutonium fuel; this is the reactor where workers were contaminated when they walked through water. A \$5 billion federal program to fabricate MOX fuel at SRS may be compromised as a result of the Japanese experience and technical review of the concept.

On the lighter side, although some Japanese wind turbines stopped operating as a result of grid failure caused by the earthquake and tsunami, most Japanese wind turbines were fully operational, including the semi-offshore wind farm that is located about 300 km from the epicenter of the quake. Six wind farms in northern Japan that stopped running after the earthquake resumed power in the wake of the disaster.

SC Chief Justice Jean Toal Receives Sandra Day O’Connor Award for the Advancement of Civics Education

By *Barbara Zia, President, LWVSC*

The League of Women Voters of South Carolina congratulates Chief Justice Jean H. Toal of the South Carolina Supreme Court on her receipt of the inaugural National Center for State Courts “Sandra Day O’Connor Award for the Advancement of Civics Education.” The award was established in 2010 to honor an organization, court, or individual who has promoted, inspired, improved, or led an innovation or accomplishment in the field of civics education.

We applaud Chief Justice Toal’s efforts to bring civics education into the classroom for South Carolina students. Through her support for programs such as the “iCivics” web-based interactive civics education program; the “Justice Case Files” educational graphic novel series; the Class Action Program, which brings middle- and- high school students to the state Supreme Court to hear oral

arguments; the Case of the Month Program, which provides streaming video of a case argued before the state Supreme Court; and the South Carolina Supreme Court Institute, which is held for middle- and high-school social studies teachers to teach them how to bring law to life for their students, Justice Toal enriches our students’ understanding of their government and enables them to be better-informed citizens.

Civics education is central to the mission of the League of Women Voters. Since 1920, our organization has encouraged informed and active participation in government, working to increase citizen understanding of and influence on major public policy issues through education and advocacy. Specifically, for the last ten years, the League of Women Voters Education Fund has focused on educating the public about

our nation’s system of separation of powers and highlighting the vital need for protecting a fair and independent judiciary.

Last fall, the League of Women Voters of South Carolina launched a state-wide civic education campaign that aims to promote transparency, independence, and diversity on the South Carolina courts. Through the next year and beyond, League chapters across the state will hold public education events, activities, and programs that aim to increase public knowledge about the third branch of government.

We thank Justice Toal for her work to educate the public about our state’s justice system. Know that you have dedicated partners in the members of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina.

South Carolina's Voting Machines II:

Auditing the Voting Machines

By *Duncan Buell, PhD, LWVSC Election Technology Specialist; Eleanor Hare, PhD, LWVSC Director*

In the 2011 Winter SC Voter we described problems with counting the November 2010 votes in Colleton and Lancaster counties and incorrect information at the State Election Commission (SEC). In this issue we describe problems with counting the vote in Richland, Horry and Charleston counties and present additional detail on the cost of operating the state's Election Systems & Software (ES&S) voting equipment.

Counting the Votes in November 2010

Richland County provides examples of poll worker error. Poll workers are instructed to collect votes from the voting machines on a Personal Electronic Ballot (PEB) and remove the flash memory cards (similar to the memory card in a digital camera) when they close the machines. Both the PEB and the flash memory are to be returned to the county election office on election night for use in computing the total vote, but in Bluff Precinct information from only two of eight voting machines was collected on the PEB.

Someone in Richland County observed that only 254 votes were certified for Bluff Precinct but thought that the voter turnout was much higher. When the voting machines used in Bluff Precinct were located, they had not been properly closed, their information had not been collected to a PEB, and the compact flash memory cards had not been removed. It was too late to include the uncounted 772 votes in the certified totals.

Also, too few votes were reported in Ward 21. Violating protocol, poll workers used two PEBs to close six voting terminals. The 339 votes from one PEB were included in the certified totals, but 355 votes on the second PEB were not.

Poll worker errors in Bluff Precinct and Ward 21 caused the failure to count 1127 votes. These poll worker errors could have been detected by procedures that accounted for all PEBs and flash memory cards.

Because the above errors had been discovered and the information on the PEBs and flash memory cards entered in the Election Report Manager, the data files for the election contained the corrected information. Our group rediscovered these errors when attempting to reconcile the data in the files with the certified vote totals. We probably would not have been able to identify the cause of these errors if the uncounted votes had not been added to the Election Report Manager data files.

Another type of error occurred in Gadsden and Riverside precincts, where 1454 certified votes were missing from the vote image file, which we used to audit the count of votes reported on each machine. When vote information is missing from the vote image file, the correctness of the reported vote cannot be verified. Missing the file of votes cast on a machine is analogous to an accountant finding a payment, but not a corresponding invoice. This kind of error could have been detected, but was not.

Horry County. We are finding anomalies, including 114 uncounted votes in one precinct, but analysis is not complete. Horry County electronic files are missing some data from 53 of 125 precincts.

Charleston County also provided incomplete vote image files, preventing an accurate audit. There were 5,499 votes certified in the June primary and 93,549 votes certified in the November General Election for which Charleston County has not been able to produce electronic vote images.

Colleton County update. The SEC called in technical experts from ES&S when neither Colleton County nor the SEC was able to produce a reliable report of the vote cast.

We intend to report on additional counties in future issues.

Problems in Conducting the Audit

The current ongoing audit of voting data from electronic data files can, if the

files are complete, produce a recount of an election. Although a recount is required by law in some circumstances (SC Code of Laws: SECTION 7-7-280. Mandatory recounts) no actual recount of the ballots is done in South Carolina. Instead, the SEC instructs the counties to sum the totals from the precincts a second time by collecting summary information from the PEBs a second time. And they do indeed sometimes get a different count. Marci Andino, SEC Executive Director, attributes a different result to a county election director's omitting a PEB from the initial count. The recount that the SEC is not doing is now being conducted under the auspices of the LWVSC.ⁱ

If the record of the actions of the Election Report Manager, the manual adjustment log file, the vote image file, and the event log file are available, an audit can confirm that votes from all voting machines are correctly reported. But, the files obtained from the counties are rarely complete, making an audit difficult, and sometimes impossible.

Another auditing problem is verification of the total votes when elections officials enter many votes manually. In Richland County, thousands of votes were manually entered into the system on Election Night – sometimes incorrectly.

In most counties paper ballots (absentee, failsafe, etc.) are read on an M-100 optical scanner, which produces a paper tape and an electronic record on a card, but does not produce electronic files that we can use for auditing. SEC procedures call for rescanning the ballots using the same scanner that counted them the first time – a procedure that may not detect the types of problems that usually occur with paper ballots.

The problems we have uncovered are not fraud and are not even the result of the known flaws in the programs that control the calculations. These problems are the result of poll workers not following instructions, PEBs and flash memory cards not being counted at the county

continued on page 11 –

Voting Machines II:

continued from page 10 –

office, and the absence of computer programs to check that all machines have had their votes correctly recorded. The stress of long hours and the pressure to produce vote totals quickly for the media on election night make the current voting system even more unreliable. Regrettably, the audit of the electronic data files cannot be relied upon to detect hacking of the system because the files themselves could have been altered.

More on Election Costs

South Carolina counties will pay over one million dollarsⁱⁱ this spring to ES&S, the manufacturer of our voting system, for annual “break/fix” and firmware contracts. This year’s contracts contain a

7% across-the-board increase over contracts for the previous year. Counties also pay state sales tax on these and all other purchases from ES&S.

Sumter, Greenville, Lexington and York are among the counties that have purchased used, refurbished iVotronics, costing about \$2,000 each. Additional costs include preparation of audio ballots by ES&S, replacement of batteries, and repairs not covered by contracts.

ii This audit is being conducted under the auspices of LWVSC by Dr. Duncan Buell, Mr. Frank Heindel, Mr. Chip Moore and Dr. Eleanor Hare. For more information see <http://lwvsc.org/audit.html>.

ii <http://clemsonarea.sc.lwvnet.org/files/ESSspreadsheets.pdf>

Task Force on Alternative Voting Technologies

The LWVSC Board voted to create a *Task Force on Alternative Voting Technologies* at its regular meeting, March 12 (<http://lwvsc.org/files/alternativevotingtechnologistaskforce.pdf>). The task force, co-chaired by Duncan Buell and Eleanor Hare, will survey published literature on voting technologies, beginning with studies conducted by other Leagues. The task force is charged with making regular reports to the state Board and the membership. Members interested in being involved in this task force can contact Duncan (buell@computer.org) or Eleanor (eleanorhare@gmail.com).

Thanks to An Outgoing Coach and Welcome to An Incoming Coach

By Janie Shipley, LWVSC Vice President, Member Services

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Sue Myers has had to resign her position as State Coach for the Membership Recruitment Initiative. Sue was very involved in arranging the state training that LWVUS conducted eight months ago for seven SC local Leagues who are participating in the MRI project. We thank Sue for her work with the MRI project and wish her well as she works to regain her health.

Sue is being replaced by Vera Stang, a Greenville League member. Vera attended the state MRI training as a representative of her local League and has hit the ground running. She arranged a meeting with members of the Columbia League, to whom she has been assigned as a coach, within a week of her new assignment. Recently she and her husband attended the Rally for a Moral Budget, of which LWVSC was a co-

sponsor, and after the rally were able to rendezvous with Columbia Leaguers. Vera will also be working as a coach for the Darlington League.

League members are invited to participate in the MRI session at the state Convention and get acquainted with the state coaching team.

IMPORTANT LEAGUE DATES:

April 2011

10th-16th National Volunteer Week

12th Tuesday, 7 p.m., Charleston Redistricting Forum.
Call 803-251-2726 for details.

16th Saturday, 12 noon Registration & Lunch, 1 p.m. Program, Florence Redistricting Forum, Weed & Seed, 1113 Oakland Ave., Florence. Free & open to all.

22nd Friday, Earth Day

May 2011

1st Sunday, Law Day

3rd Tuesday, Annual Conservation Lobby Day (a Conservation Common Agenda event), Columbia.

7th Saturday, Last day to register to vote in June 7th state primary election.

13th Friday, 6 p.m., LWVSC Board Meeting follows dinner. Swan Lake Iris Gardens, 822 W. Liberty St., Sumter*

14th-15th Saturday-Sunday, LWVSC Convention, Sumter. Hosted by LWV/Sumter County.

31st Monday, Memorial Day

June 2011

3rd Tuesday, First regular session of the 119th South Carolina General Assembly adjourns, Columbia.

7th Tuesday, South Carolina Primary Election Day

17th-20th LWVUS Council Meeting, Washington, DC

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



LWV SC Voter

Post Office Box 8453
Columbia, SC 29202

The SC Voter

Spring 2011
Volume 60 Issue 4

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.

President: Barbara Zia

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

LWVSC

Along With Other Opponents of Photo Voter ID

HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE



12



Website: www.lwvsc.org

Join the League today!