

League of Women Voters of South Carolina

League Leaders Update

April 2010

From Barbara Zia, President

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Local League Presidents and Member-at-Large Chairs,

It's spring and the hum of honeybees, elections, local League annual meetings, state League council and national League convention fills the air. League leaders are busy passing the torch to new leaders and setting the course for an exciting League year of study, action, service to voters, and member activities. Whether you are beginning a new term or continuing, thank you for your commitment to leading the League in South Carolina at the local level. Your leadership is critical to the success of our organization. We believe our roles in working together is one of the key elements in strengthening the League in South Carolina and furthering League goals. Leadership at every League level provides a unique opportunity to grow professionally and personally, as well as to make a difference for the citizens of our communities, state and nation.

I hope you will act on the messages in this month's League Leaders Update, keep them for future reference, and forward to your entire leadership team. Thank you for all you do for the League and our state.

Barbara

Upcoming 2010 LWVSC Events

May 4, Conservation Lobby Day, Columbia

July, Membership Growth Project: In-state training for local League coordinators. Dates and Columbia area location to be announced soon.

August 21, League Leaders Day, Columbia. Location and time to be announced.

State Council Wrap-up--It was wonderful seeing so many of you at the biennial LWVSC Council meeting in Columbia on April 24. It was an exciting day and I hope everyone left as motivated as I was feeling--that, working together, we will continue to make a difference in South Carolina. If you were unable to make it to Council you can view the Workbook, including the Board Report, at <http://www.lwvsc.org/whatsnew.html>. Please note that the proposed 2010-2011 LWVSC Budget was adopted as presented by the Budget Committee. Sincere thanks go to the Committee: Sharon Fennell, Chair; Janie White and Rebecca Lambert, Members; Dianne Haselton, LWVSC Treasurer and Ex Officio Member. The new budget maintains state LWV Per Member Payment at its current rate.

LWVSC Board Meeting followed Council on April 24. Here are a few highlights from this brief meeting. The Board:

- Accepted the resignation of Sheila Gallagher from the state Board. Sheila, a member of LWV/Florence Area, has served the state League ably for the past 3 years as K-12 Education Director. She recently filed as a candidate for SC House District 63. LWVSC Nonpartisan Policy requires that state Board members who run for a partisan political office resign from the Board. As you know, the League encourages our members to run for political office. We are very proud of Sheila but, of course, do not endorse her candidacy. We are seeking someone to fill Sheila's big shoes as state League K-12 Education Director. This is an important role, as education is one of our legislative priorities. Please contact Frances Elmore with any recommendations

(djmfle@aol.com or 843-662-5143).

- Appointed 3 state League delegates to LWVUS Convention

- Discussed possible changes to Legislative Advocacy Day. For several years, this annual February event has brought LWV, AAUW and School Improvement Council members for education and advocacy on issues related to our state's children and youth. Leaders of the 3 organizations are discussing ways to make the event even more beneficial for our members. Some options under consideration are: sponsoring an advocacy workshop on a Saturday while the Legislature is in recess; focusing Legislative Advocacy on a briefing on specific legislation, followed by lobbying at the Statehouse. The state Board would appreciate any input you and your members may have.

League Nonpartisan Policies. Now that the 2010 election season is in high gear, it's important for your League to review its nonpartisan policy to ensure that your leadership team is in compliance, as well as to determine if the policy needs change. This should be an agenda item for the first new board meeting following Annual Meeting.

Remind your leadership team: As a nonpartisan organization, the League of Women Voters does not support or oppose political parties or candidates. Nonpartisanship governs all League activities. It is the key to the LWV's reputation and adds strength to the stands we take on issues. It makes possible wide acceptance of and participation in League voters service and other educational activities. It enables Leagues to hold respected, thoughtful candidate forums in which all eligible candidates participate, to hold balanced forums, and to bring different or opposing views together for true dialogue and discussion.

A League's nonpartisan policy governs the political behavior of board members and varies by League, reflecting the political climate in communities where they are located. For LWVSC, only the president and voters service vice president are required to refrain from any public support of candidates or parties; but all board members are required to resign from the board when they run for partisan political office.

Laurel Suggs and I are happy to discuss any questions you may have about about nonpartisanship, including League-sponsored voters service activities, such as candidate debates and forums. You can reach Laurel at 803-777-7050 or lsuggs@imgsc.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 project continues apace. Project Coordinator Janie Shipley and 2 State Coaches, Rebecca Lambert(LWV/Greenville County) and Joyce Franklin (LWV/Darlington County), led an excellent session at Council about the project and opportunities for local Leagues to participate. They were joined by LWV/Charleston Area's Shayna Howell, LWVUS Ruth Shur Fellow and National Coach. Local Leagues that interested in being part of this exciting project should complete the attached application form and return it to Janie by May 19. I hope you are as thrilled as I am about this "Getting to Great" opportunity for the League in South Carolina.

Six local SC Leagues will be chosen to participate in the first wave of the membership initiative, cosponsored by LWVUS and LWVSC. A local League will be assigned a membership

“coach” who has been trained by LWVUS (your coach will not be a member of your local League). The membership coach will have monthly communication with your local membership chair.

Expectations:

- a commitment by your Board to participate;
- completion of application (to include a 1-3 page description of your League, your community and your proposal) by May 19;
- commitment of two - three members to attend July training – details on training will be forthcoming.

Contact Janie Shipley with questions and application request (864.885.1967 or janrel@mindspring.com; reference "membership recruitment" in the subject line).

Conservation Lobby Day, May 4. League members are welcome to this free event that LWVSC is proudly cosponsoring. Conservationists from around the state will travel to the Statehouse to meet, greet and urge elected leaders to support Conservation Common Agenda priorities. The day begins with a briefing at the Columbia Museum of Art, after which the group walks to the Statehouse to speak to legislators about conservation bills. During the afternoon, participants attend committee meetings and enjoy free time to watch green films, participate in a happy hour or tour Columbia, the art museum and the Statehouse grounds. In the evening participants attend an informal oyster roast under the stars at 701 Whaley. Come enjoy live music and local food with legislative guests. LWVSC will have an information table during the oyster roast, so stop by. The invitation and agenda are attached. Contact Brusi Alexander with questions, 803-776-3578 or cricketwm@aol.com.

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. Details will follow soon.

Leadership Changes--As soon as possible after your annual meeting, please send me via email your new list of officers and directors, including contact information. We want to make sure that leadership teams for all of our local Leagues and MAL Units are included in the 2009-2010 LWVSC Leaders Directory which will be printed this summer.

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?
Please contact:

Betty Taira in the LWVUS office 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.

LWVUS 2010 Convention, June 11-15. Having Convention just down the road in Atlanta has South Carolina Leaguers abuzz. Mary Klentz, Convention Chair, led interested members in a convention briefing after Council. In a separate email I will survey local League presidents regarding delegates or observers from their Leagues and their travel and lodging plans. There will be ride and room sharing opportunities for those who are interested. Delegates from South Carolina Leagues sit together in our state's designated area during the plenary meetings and are welcome to enjoy refreshments and fellowship in the state League's "hospitality room" at the end of each afternoon's sessions. Convention is a wonderful opportunity for networking and building friendships, as well as learning.

We've had questions about members who are attending convention and want to be a delegate (which we highly recommend). Mary Klentz shared this information--If a member's local LWV's delegate allotment is already taken they may serve as a delegate for another LWV. In order to do this, the President of the LWV that the delegate is representing should send an email to Lela Sallis at LWVUS (LSallis@lwv.org) stating:

As President of LWV _____, I am authorizing
_____ to serve as a delegate from LWV _____
at the LWVUS 2010 Convention.

Mary suggests that the President copy the delegate and me as LWVSC President. Also, if the delegate is registering via postal mail include a copy of that email. If not, the delegate might want to refer to that email on the online registration form and take a copy of the authorizing email to Convention. A delegate representing another League should ask that League about any issues to be brought before Convention, and offer to make a written or in-person report to that League on return from Convention.