

# Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/BLUFFTON AREA



## JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING



As in previous years, we will start the new year with a report on the State of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

**Mayor Drew Laughlin** will speak on **January 11**, at **10:00 a.m.** in the community room at **Hilton Head PSD, 21 Oak Park Drive**. We look forward to hearing about what has happened in the past year and what Mayor Laughlin hopes will happen in the future. We urge all members, their guests and any interested persons to attend. Please note that we will have a similar meeting in Bluffton on March 7, when **Mayor Lisa Sulka** will speak on the State of the Town of Bluffton.

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## LWVHHI/Bluffton Area Holiday Luncheon

"You Better Watch Out" .

ness," and she cautioned

way of how we treat one another "because our children are listening."

The popular children's song *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town* contains this oft-quoted line, but on Wednesday, December 7, it was given new meaning as sixty-one people attending the LWVHHI/Bluffton Area Holiday Luncheon in Moss Creek listened to Dr. Valerie Truesdale warn: "Our students believe that our society is trippin' on mean-



Valerie Truesdale

those in attendance to be

"Thoughtful adults must hold those who are mean accountable. If you see something—say something," the Superintendent of Beaufort County Schools implored. She informed League members about "cyber-bullying" and students who believe that "freedom of blogging" has become one of their

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## HAPPY NEW YEAR



## From the President

Happy New Year! We are starting out on a good note with news of a \$300 grant from the SC League for the Youth Voter Registration Project. Members who are interested in being a part of the planning and implementation of this voter service activity should contact Sue Feutz or me. Our contact information is on the back page of this newsletter.

Our State League continues to monitor the status of the voter photo ID law and SC Senate Bill 20 which addresses immigration.

LWV/SC opposes both of these legal initiatives. For information and explanation of the league positions, please visit

[www.LWVSC.org](http://www.LWVSC.org). And remember, while the League

takes advocacy positions on governmental measures and policies, it neither supports nor opposes any political party or candidate. Non-board members of the League are encouraged to participate individually in political activities; however board members must comply with our Non-Partisan Policy Statement, which is reprinted in this newsletter.

This month, our regularly scheduled meeting on January 11 features Hilton Head Island Mayor Drew Laughlin. Please mark your calendars and join us.

And finally, our Holiday Luncheon was one of our most successful, both in terms of turn-out and the featured speaker, Valerie Truesdale, the Beaufort



LWVHH/BLUFFTON  
President  
Karen Wessel

County Superintendent of Schools and honorees Loretta Warden and Laura Bush. Many thanks go to Fran Holt and Katie Miller for planning this festive occasion.

Happy New Year to all,

Karen Wilber Wessel

## Membership

In November and December, amidst the holiday festivities, we gained these four new members: Carrie Lee Amankwah, Julie Bell, Laura Bush, and Adrienne O'Neill. Welcome all and thank you for joining the League. We look forward to getting to know you and encourage you to become involved in areas of the League that interest you. Looking back on 2011, it was a healthy year for our membership. Since May, we have added 14 members to our roster bringing our total membership up to 94 ac-

tive members.

I also want to thank these members for their recent recruitment efforts and for helping me to grow our membership: Jan Billingslea, Ellen Forwalk, Ginny Ghirardelli, Fran Holt, Dot Law, Kathy Quirk, Ronni Silett and Barbara Swift. The League is always in the recruitment mode so everyone can participate by reaching out to those friends and acquaintances around you and telling them about the League. I encourage you to invite someone to come with you

to our January 11 membership meeting. Also share our newsletter with them by forwarding a current copy of the Light-house via email or hard copy. And remember that many people have never been asked to join the League, so don't be bashful, go ahead and ask. If you have the name of someone interested in the League that you would like me to contact, please let me know and I will follow up. We are a strong team, all in this together, helping citizens to have a voice in

*(Continual on page 3)*

## Save the Date

**Our annual Spring Shake the Winter Blahs Party will take place on Sunday, February 26, at the home of Sally and Bob McGarry from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Put it on your calendar and watch for a flier.**

## LWVHHI/Bluffton Area Holiday Luncheon

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fundamental rights. As responsible citizens, she beseeched League members to help the schools to provide "an environment of emotional and physical safety for our students."

Dr. Truesdale acknowledged the invaluable service of the day's honorees, Laura Bush and Loretta Warden, who have continually fostered an open and honest dialogue about what constitutes the public good. Dr. Truesdale recognized that these two women embody the ideals of our founding fathers, such as George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson, who emphasized civility, respect,

responsibility, and "good old-fashioned debate about the public good, public well-being, public safety, and public education." Moreover, she declared that leadership skills are as important as reading and writing, because "leadership is an attitude."

The citation for the book that Dr. Truesdale mentioned in her remarks is as follows: Thomas L. Friedman and Michael Mandelbaum.

(2011) *That Used To Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World It Invented and How We Can Come Back*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux. ISBN 978-0-374-28890-7



Laura Bush, Loretta Warden and President Karen Wessel

Laura Bush, Beaufort County School Board, and Loretta Warden, Chair of the Hilton Head Island Planning Commission, were honored for their leadership and service in public office. The League of Women Voters of HHI/Bluffton Area encourages more women to seek public office.

## Membership

(Continued from page 2)

government.

In November I telephoned many of you whom I have not yet met to introduce myself, say hello, see if you are receiving our newsletter or have any concerns that I can pass on to the Board. I appreciate your time to take my call. This was a good opportunity for me to better get to know the membership. For those of you who mentioned that you can no longer attend our meetings, we are putting together a group of Leaguers who would like to stop by in January and bring the latest League news to you in person. A "Have League Will Travel Caravan" will be in your neighborhood soon. I will call first to arrange a convenient day and time with you for us to stop by for a visit. For members interested in joining the caravan to visit some of our senior members, please contact me at 843-706-3735 or [wittig4@hargray.com](mailto:wittig4@hargray.com).

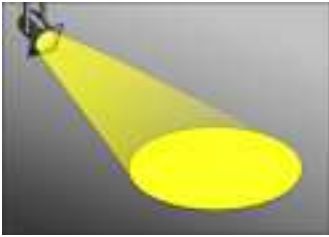
Happy New Year, Everyone!

Julie Wittig  
Membership Chair



Visit our web Site

[www.lwvhi.org](http://www.lwvhi.org)



**Spotlight On  
Janet Law**



## Janet Law

Fast facts about me: Born in northern New Jersey before the United States entered WW2. Moved to Columbus, Ohio in 1970 with four children and a husband. Enrolled in The Ohio State University in 1978 as a single parent. Graduated in 1982 with a BSc that included a minor in Women's Studies. Arrived on Hilton Head Island in 1988, single with a dog. Once here, met a wonderful man on the beach and enjoyed too few years as a married couple before he died in 1998.

My League story starts in New Jersey in the late '60s. At that time I was a young mother of four and, like many who remember that time, I felt a growing personal interest in what was going on in our country and how those events impacted local life. I wanted to think and talk with people who were similarly inclined and knowledgeable. As a "joiner" in those days, I was already active in the PTA and my church and the Jaycee-ettes and a neighborhood organiza-

tion, but the League seemed different, and it was. Meetings stimulated me to learn more, and League publications and studies offered factual and trustworthy information that I could use and bring to other settings

When we moved to Ohio, I looked for a League unit in Columbus and joined one but also started one in my new neighborhood. The unit system, which allowed for small meetings at different times of the day, is a League feature that in recent times is mostly found in big cities, and I regret that because it's a wonderful way to introduce League concepts to newcomers as well as to provide additional membership opportunities for those who cannot meet at 10 a.m. during the week.

Years of managing life as a single mother had an impact on my League participation, and it wasn't until Fran Holt encouraged me to join our local chapter that I found myself once again enjoying active membership. I should have joined LWVHHI/BA sooner!

I ended up on the Board

after sitting in a Nominating Committee meeting while candidates for League offices were considered. When none emerged as a likely Treasurer for the coming two-year term, I found myself volunteering to be nominated, and I can honestly say I've enjoyed serving in that capacity since 2008. For the past two years I've also assisted LWVHHI.org Webmaster Bob McGarry as we revamped and maintain the website, and that has also been a rewarding experience.

Along the way someone gave me the title "Web Liaison" and while I'm not sure what that actually means, it fits with my interest in following the League Leaders list-serv, which I would highly recommend for people who want to feel more connected to League thinking around the country. As time passes, I see an increasing need for nonpartisan organizations to moderate and influence civic life at all levels, and I am more than proud to be a small part of what so many smart and persistent men and women have worked at for more than ninety years.

## Observing at Government Meetings

By Joan Kinne-Shulman

Observer Corps volunteers have faithfully attended twice-a-month HHI Town Council and Planning Commission meetings and the monthly Bluffton Town Council meetings. We also observed at many of the meetings of the Land Management Ordinance Rewrite Committee.

In Bluffton, we will be watching how the new council will implement the May River Action Plan adopted in November.

The LMO Rewrite Committee is working to change local laws to make them fit the current needs of the town. The committee is currently in the process of hiring consultants to help with development and code issues.

At the HHI Planning Commission, and the Town Council, we are monitoring the creation of government priorities for 2012 (just adopted), the redevelopment plans for Coligny Plaza and the Shelter Cove Mall, the proposals to improve cell phone service on the island, and beach renourishment and other environmental issues. We also keep an eye on how the TIF (Tax Increment Financing) areas are progressing. Obviously, we continue to be concerned about redistricting plans, recycling, possible changes in land acquisition policy, and airport issues. When appropriate, we suggest to President Karen Wessel that we need to communicate with officials or speak out on an issue of concern to the

League.

At the meetings, which usually last less than an hour, it is always interesting to see what actually transpires rather than read about the highlights in the Packet, how the staff performs, what questions council or commission members ask, and who from the audience speaks out and on what topics.

The Observer Corps needs more volunteers to cover the Bluffton Town Council meetings. As of now, only Kevin Schone-man attends the meetings on a regular basis.

If anyone is interested in being an observer at any of the meetings, or has questions, please get in touch with me at 842-9246 or at [rjshulman@hargray.com](mailto:rjshulman@hargray.com).



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## An Opportunity To Influence Future League Studies And Action

On February 2 at 9:30 a.m. the Board will meet at the Palmetto Electric Building, 111 Mathews Dr. At 10:45, we will break for a quick stretch, light refreshments and a bit of socializing, and at 11:00 we will do national and local program planning. As always, all members are welcome to come to the board meeting, but we especially want non-board members to come at 10:45 and to participate in program planning. It will not be an overly lengthy meeting, because we must vacate the room by 12:30.

Do you ever disagree with some of the positions of our national organization,

LWVUS, or is there some issue that you would like to recommend for study and possible action? If so, this is your chance to make a difference. During national program planning, we will have the opportunity to propose one new study, one review and update, or one concurrence or to make no recommendation. Final action on national program planning will be taken in June at the LWVUS Convention in Washington, D.C. To review our current national positions, please refer to *Impact on Issues* on the LWVUS website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

During local program plan-

ning, we will review our current positions and make recommendations for keeping them as they are, dropping them or restudying them. We can also recommend new studies. The membership will take final action on the recommendations at our annual meeting on May 16. To prepare for this part of the meeting, please refer to the *League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area Public Policy* on our website, [www.lwvhhi.org](http://www.lwvhhi.org) or call me at 837-3436 if you want a copy mailed to you.

Fran Holt, VP/Program Chair

## 2012....Be Involved!

For many of us the New Year means making resolutions for what we want to change or accomplish in the coming year. If you are striving to make a difference in your community, the League offers wonderful opportunities for personal and professional growth. As a League member, here are a few ideas to consider doing in 2012:

Register voters (with the 2012 election on November 6, LWV will be busy this year registering and educating voters).

Attend a Board meeting and see how our League functions.

Attend a consensus meeting (education and privatization studies will begin this February and March).

Become an observer and be the eyes and ears of the League by observing how local government works (attend a meeting of the Town Councils, Town Planning Commissions).

Volunteer for a League event (help staff our booth at a fun event).

Write to your elected representatives about issues that are important to you.

Volunteer to be on a committee (education, voter services and observer corps need volunteers). For more information, please contact these committee chairs:

Education Chair Pamela Hollinger at 843-706-9928 or [pamelahollinger@yahoo.com](mailto:pamelahollinger@yahoo.com);

Voter Services Chair Sue Feutz at 843-415-6445 or [feutzs@yahoo.com](mailto:feutzs@yahoo.com);

Government Issues/Observer Corps Chair Joan Kinne-Shulman at 843-842-9246 or [rjshulman@hargray.com](mailto:rjshulman@hargray.com).

Attend monthly membership meetings to stay informed on current issues.

Come and join us this year in the many things we do to safeguard democracy along with keeping our communities strong, safe and vibrant. The League welcomes your participation.

Julie Wittig, Membership Chair

## LWV Privatization Study

By Joan Kinne-Shulman

League year 2011-2012 seems to be the year of member participation—at least here with the LWV/Bluffton Area group. At the League national convention in Atlanta in 2010, Leaguers voted to begin a consensus study of the privatization of government functions at the local, state, and national levels. The following describes the scope of the study: “The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer fed-

eral, state, or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability and preservation of the common good.” Once consensus is reached, the LWVUS will develop a policy position in order to be able to speak out on the topic.

The local Privatization Study Committee is reading the basic resource materials as they are created and posted on the national League website (LWV.org)

The consensus questions are due to be posted shortly. Our discussion and consensus meeting will be held in April 2012.

So far, the committee consists of Joan Kinne-Shulman as chair, Bob McGarry, Fred and Fran Holt, Karen Wessel, and Janet Law. If anyone is interested in being on the study committee, please contact me at 842-9246 or [rjshulman@hargray.com](mailto:rjshulman@hargray.com).

Visit our web Site

[www.lwvhi.org](http://www.lwvhi.org)

## LWVHHI Nonpartisan Policy Statement

The League may take action on governmental measures and policies in keeping with League positions. However, it shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

Recognizing that the League experience uniquely equips members for public life and wishing to encourage members to fully utilize their knowledge and abilities, non-board members are urged to participate fully in party activities (on an individual basis).

Because the Board has the responsibility of maintaining the nonpartisanship of the organization, eligibility for serving on the Board is affected by political activity. The time period between the political activity and eligibility for serving on the Board is to be decided on a case by case basis by the Board at its discretion. Specific activities that preclude serving on the Board in any capacity are as follows:

- \* Holding or actively seeking political office
- \* Serving as an official, including precinct captain, in a party organization or in an organization endorsing a candidate for public office
- \* Participating in campaigns in such a way as to be identified publicly with the candidate
- \* Circulating nominating petitions and distributing campaign materials

In addition, eligibility for the presidency and the position of voter service chairman precludes:

- \* Working on a candidate's campaign

Activities that do not affect eligibility for service on the Board in any capacity include:

- \* Signing nominating petitions
- \* Donating money (any amount) to political campaigns
- \* Attending campaign social events
- \* Serving on governmental commission and coalitions as long as the appointee uses discretion and is aware of League position as they relate to the commissions responsibilities
- \* Political activities of family members

If a Board member plans to engage in political activity that is precluded by the League's nonpartisan policy, the member should resign from the Board. If a Board member has any questions about the appropriateness of a political activity, that member must seek the Board's decision. Public notices released by the League regarding the resignation by a Board member running for public office should avoid the appearance of a League endorsement.

Board members should speak and act on the own behalf unless they are representing the League. When representing the League, they should work to promote League positions when appropriate and should never work against League positions.

1/15/98

General Membership Meeting  
10:00 a.m., February 8  
Hilton Head PSD Building  
21 Oak Park Dr. (off Mathews Dr.)



Education Committee Chair Pamela Hollinger will lead a discussion on the state study, **Evaluating and Retaining Effective Teachers in Our Public Schools**. Members will be asked to answer consensus questions, which will be provided to the membership in advance of the meeting.

Save the Date

Our annual Spring Shake the Winter Blahs Party will take place on Sunday, February 26, at the home of Sally and Bob McGarry from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Put it on your calendar and watch for a flier.

January  
Calendar of Events

Board Meetings

Thursday, January 5, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

Thursday, February 2, 9:45 at Savannah Bank,  
852 Wm. Hilton Parkway .

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

Membership Meetings

10 AM, Wednesday, January 11

**Mayor Drew Laughlin**

The State of the Town of Hilton Head Island  
Hilton Head Public Service District #1  
23 Oak Park Drive.

General Membership Meeting

10:00 a.m., February 8

Hilton Head PSD Building  
21 Oak Park Dr.

Officers and Board 2011-2012

OFFICERS

President:

Karen Wessel 682-3397

Vice-President, Program Chair:

Fran Holt 837-3436

Treasurer:

Janet Law 671-4280

Secretary:

Caroline McVitty 681-6124

BOARD

Fund-raising: vacant

Education: Pamela Hollinger 706-9928

Government Issues/Observer Corps:

Joan Kinne-Shulman 842-9246

Hospitality: Katie Miller 681-6448

Membership: Julie Wittig 706-3735

Newsletter: Bob McGarry 342-9254

Public Relations/Publicity:

Dee Ann Dowlan 341-2318

Voters Services: Sue Feutz 415-6445