



Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

Mayor Peeples to Usher in 2010



It has become our custom to begin each calendar year with a report on the “**State of the Town**” from **Mayor Thomas D. Peeples**. Our meeting will be held on **Wednesday, January 13, at 10:00 a.m.** in the Community Room at **Hilton Head PSD, 21 Oak Park Drive**. In recounting the accomplishments of the government of the Town in the past year and laying out his vision for the year ahead, the Mayor has often surprised us with the announcement of a new project or a new policy. We are pleased to be able to welcome him to our January meeting again this year, and encourage all members to attend and to bring a friend. Guests are particularly welcome.

Sally McGarry, Vice President and Program Chair

Inside this issue:

Mayor Peeples on “State of the Town”	1
Linda Tarr-Whelan Sparks Holiday Luncheon	1
From the Presidents	2
Voter Access	3
Membership Committee	4
Look for the Banner	4
State Action	4
Census Update	5
Calendar	6

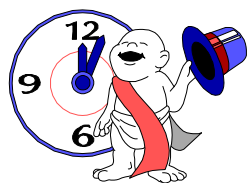
Linda Tarr-Whelan Sparks Holiday Luncheon

This year, our League joined with the Hilton Head Island Branch of the American Association of University Women for an outstanding Holiday Luncheon on Wednesday, December 9th. The Jazz Corner provided a unique setting and the menu was delicious. Members of other women’s organizations on the Island had been invited also, resulting in a packed house.

The speaker, Ambassador Linda Tarr-Whelan, was, undoubtedly, a big draw. Her topic, “A Better Future When Women Lead the Way,” grew out of a new book she has written, “Women Lead the Way: Your Guide to Stepping Up to Leadership and Changing the World.” She spoke first of the incredible amount of talent possessed by women in the U.S. Nevertheless, they are not moving up in our country; their skills are not being tapped. She told us her research has shown that, when women make up 1/3 or more of corporate boards, the corporations make higher profits. The first half of her book is devoted to making the case for having 30% of women “at the table” to ensure better outcomes. With women in positions of power, the agenda changes. Family and societal issues are addressed. Their management style is more collaborative and inclusive.

Other countries have recognized the importance of including women in government. 51 years ago, Sri Lanka elected their first women president. Yet, in this country, 30% of the voters think the U.S. is still not ready for a woman president. With 17% of our Congress being comprised of women, we rank 84th in the world. Three-quarters of the top 1500 U.S. companies have no women on their boards.

Ambassador Tarr-Whelan is embarking on a 26-state speaking tour intended to encourage the conversation on how we can get to the magic 30% in this country, not only on corporate boards, but in governmental bodies large and small, in non-profit organizations, in community groups, to level the playing field for women and bring about better outcomes for society. She challenged each of us to determine whom we can help, what doors we can open to create opportunities for girls and women to lead the way.



Happy New Year

From the Presidents



In 1976 Mary L. Brian, a past President of both the Columbia and State League of Women Voters, wrote a history of the LWV of SC to mark the Bicentennial Celebration of the United States. Proud Heritage is in the historical collection at our Library. As we will be celebrating the League's 90th birthday next month, it's interesting to look back on the early years of the League and learn about their struggles and accomplishments.

The first South Carolina League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 "to foster education in citizenship and to support improved legislation." Citizenship Schools were established around the State and ten local Leagues were started. They struggled for community acceptance because interest in politics was considered unladylike, and the men objected to the Citizenship Schools. They thought that if women wanted to learn to vote they could just go and vote like their husbands.

The first newsletter, the "State Bulletin" was published in 1926, but interest soon waned. Lack of sustained leadership, lack of interested members, lack of funds, plus the Great Depression all contributed to the demise of the SCLWV in 1932.

The League was revived with the establishment of the Charleston and Columbia Leagues in 1947 and the Spartanburg League in 1948. Public support was better; the Spartanburg Herald wrote

an editorial announcing plans to organize the League, and 150 women showed up.

These three Leagues spearheaded efforts to improve voter registration records, and were effective in promoting the Council-Manager form of government in their cities. They did "Know Your Town" studies and published newsletters. They met in 1950 to organize a State League.

Formed in 1951, the major task of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina was to establish a reputation as a responsible, credible group. The first program item was a study of State Government, revealing that the South Carolina Constitution of 1875 needed revising. The League was to work on this for many years. Public education was a special concern from the beginning. When a movement was started to cut off funding and privatize the public schools rather than desegregate them, the League joined the opposition and succeeded in defeating the proposal.

The Observer Corps was active, monitoring the legislature on a regular basis. They had seats in the gallery in both the House and the Senate and were there three days a week during sessions. They were provided calendars and even a file cabinet!

By the mid-fifties there were six local Leagues, but tensions arose with the National League over



LWVHHI Co-Presidents
Ginny Ghiradeli Barbara Swift

the issue of trade liberalization and especially textile imports. Morale and membership suffered and the Spartanburg League in particular was impacted.

After a few years the League was invigorated once again. Taking up the issue of water resources and education sparked an interest, and fund-raising and membership recruitment responded to the use of pamphlets describing the LWV and its programs. In 1966 a study of registration and election laws increased member participation. Human resources, equal opportunity in education, employment and housing were added to program. The Voter, first published in 1951, expanded from four issues a year to six. The League as an organization drew respect from legislators and others. LWVSC won a tape recorder at National Convention for the largest percentage of membership growth of any State League in 1968.

Success in election law change came when the daughter of a League member, a senior at an out-of-state college, was refused the right to vote absentee. Students on the campus started a campaign to raise money to send her home to SC to

Save The Date!
LWV's 90th Birthday
Party
February 28, 2010
Connie & Jerry
Voight's home

From the Presidents

(Continued from page 2)

vote, and it drew national attention.

The publicity either embarrassed SC legislators or convinced them of the error of their ways, because the law was changed.

"Know Your State", "It's The Law", "The Poll Watchers Handbook", and "How To Vote" were popular publications. In 1970 the SC Committee to Re-elect the President (Nixon) used material from "How To Vote" in a campaign poster, changing the title for its own. The League requested public acknowledgment of their unauthorized use of League material but received none. The League notified the press and learned to get material copyrighted.

The League also learned to work in coalitions, increased action in election law, school financing, tideland protection, and freedom of information. In work on water issues, a League member was influential at a Conservation Symposium held on Hilton Head Island that blocked the location of a large chemical complex on the Colleton River, on what is now the site of the Waddell Mariculture Center. And, of course, work for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment was high on the agendas of many Leagues.

Browse through Brian's little book; you'll be inspired by the work she chronicles, and amused by some of the anecdotes she records. Would you believe a daring suffra-

gette dropping leaflets while sitting on the wing of an airplane in 1919?

In our early period, as now, the most valuable contribution of the League has been the nonpartisan voter service information on issues and candidates and the publications compiled and distributed. The other public service we provide is as a source of information; requests come to us from teachers, students, government officials, other organizations, candidates and parties. Members tell us they have honed leadership skills by their active participation in the League of Women Voters.

When we study the past, we remember our purpose. As Betty Wiggins, President of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina 1960-1961, put it: "Let's not lose sight of why we want to strengthen our Leagues. . .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."

Update on Voter Access

We continue to monitor H 3418, the Voter Photo ID bill passed in the South Carolina House of Representatives last session. It has been in the Senate Judiciary Committee, and could come up early in the session of the Legislature in January. We oppose the legislation because it is a barrier to voting, it's unnecessary, and it's costly

We are also dismayed that H 3608 has been amended to restrict Early Voting. Originally the time period allowed for early voting was 15 days, but at the last minute it was changed to 3 days. The League of Women Voters recommended a 30 day early voting period that would include at least two Saturdays and apply to all elections.

Under H 3608 Absentee voting is also further restricted. Absentee ballots would need to be paper ballots only - no in person absentee voting. An absentee ballot would have to be requested in writing or in person only, no phone requests, and made at the voter registration office.

Ginny Ghirardelli



Membership

As Membership Chairman, I would like to wish all of our members and their families a Happy Healthy New Year.

I also want to welcome Andrea Bhatt to our League. We are happy you have chosen to join us in our important work.

As we start a new year, I would like to remind everyone to help the membership committee by referring to us anyone whom you feel might like to join the League. Any ideas about how to recruit new members are also encouraged. I can be reached at 681-3096. Again, have a wonderful Holiday Season.

Ellen Forwalk



State Action

The South Carolina General Assembly is scheduled to be in session from January 13 to June 3. In anticipation of the start of what should be a very busy legislative session, our League recently wrote to Senator Davis and Representatives Chalk and Herbkersman. We wished them a productive session, offered our support for issues on which we share positions and asked them to consider our views on issues on which we differ. We sent them an article on the League of South Carolina's current legislative agenda for public education that appeared in the fall issue of the *SC Voter*. We also sent Senator Davis an article opposing photo voter identification that appeared in that same issue of the *SC Voter*.

We expect this issue to be considered by the Senate very soon. If you don't have a copy of the fall *SC*

Voter, you can find it at www.lwvsc.org.

Please mark your 2010 calendars with the following important dates. On Tuesday, February 23, Legislative Advocacy Day will be held in Columbia. As in past years, members interested in learning more about what's happening in the General Assembly and how we might make a difference are encouraged to attend. A second date connected with advocacy is March 10. Our League will hold a general membership meeting open to the public on advocacy. The intent is to discuss effective advocacy techniques using current important issues as examples. More information on these two events will be available later.

Fran Holt
Action Chair for
State Issues

LOOK FOR THE LEAGUE BANNER !



Actually, it's more like a signboard on a pole, but it identifies the League contingent marching in the Martin Luther King Holiday parade on Monday, January 18. We have participated in this community event for several years, and all members are welcome to join in. We will assemble in the parking lot at Hilton Head High School at 9:45 a.m.

The march takes about 30 minutes at a leisurely pace, and culminates with a program in the school's auditorium and lunch in the cafeteria.

Hilton Head, County Counting on Big Returns from 2010 Census

From the Island Packet 19 Dec

The 2010 U.S. Census might show that Hilton Head Island has grown by as many as 5,000 residents since 2000. Overall, Beaufort County will likely tally 36,000 more residents, if population estimates prove correct.

Hilton Head and Beaufort County are in the second-fastest-growing congressional district in the state, according to Mike MacFarlane, the state's demographer for the Office of Research and Statistics. The congressional district that encompasses Charleston is the fastest growing.

"That's a fair amount of people," MacFarlane said, adding that most of those people moved to Beaufort County from outside the state, many into retirement communities.

Questionnaires for the U.S. Census, taken once every 10 years, go out in

March, and much rides on their results. In fact, South Carolina might pick up another congressional seat, if population projections hold.

In addition, Hilton Head could add another seat on the Beaufort County Council, according to Randy Nicholson, the town's comprehensive planning manager. Accurate numbers also are essential for the town's emergency evacuation plans, he said.

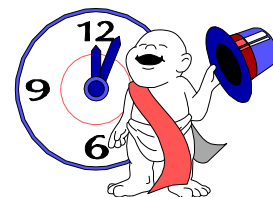
Some federal and state funds are apportioned by population, MacFarlane said, making it crucial for the state and local governments to have a complete count of residents.

The Town of Hilton Head has been working with the U.S. Census Bureau for two years to assure an accurate count, said Hilton Head Island town manager Steve Riley. Nicholson suspects that the is-

land's 2000 census numbers are inaccurate because residents either didn't receive surveys because of inaccurate address records or they didn't fill them out.

MacFarlane estimates that the 2000 census undercounted state residents by about 42,000. The state had the second-lowest survey response rate in the country, according to the Census Bureau. Alaska has the lowest rate of response.

About two months ago, the bureau notified the town that it needed verification for 15,000 of the addresses and gave the town 45 days to do so. The town returned seven reams of documents to verify the addresses a week before its Dec. 22 deadline. The numbers are too important, Nicholson said, "and we weren't going to take any chances."



Sally McGarry, Vice President, joined S.C. Rep. Richard Chalk and other elected officials, as well as a Marine Corps Color Guard, at the December 4 ribbon-cutting celebrating the opening of the Beaufort County Local Census Office. The office is located at 2121 Boundary Street, Suite 200, in Beaufort.

The League of Women Voters of the U.S. has partnered with the U.S. Census Bureau to help ensure the success of the 2010 Census, and the local League is a partner with the Beaufort Office to achieve a complete and accurate census count in Beaufort County.



League of Woman Voters of
 Hilton Head Island
 PO Box 23862
 Hilton Head Island,
 South Carolina
 29925

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
 FROM
 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS
 LWVHHI**

**JANUARY
 Calendar of Events**

Officers and Board 2009—2010

Board Meetings

Thursday, January 7, 9:45 am at Savannah Bank,
 852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

Thursday, February 4, 9:45 am at Savannah
 Bank, 852 Wm. Hilton Parkway

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

Membership Meeting

Wednesday, January 13, at 10:00 A.M.
 Hilton Head PSD, 21 Oak Park Drive. Speaker: Mayor
 Tom Peebles, "State of the Town" address.

Monday, January 18, Martin Luther King Day March.
 Gather at 9:45 A.M. at the Hilton Head High School
 parking lot to walk with the LWVHHI contingent.

**Save The Date!
 LWV's 90th Birthday Party
 February 28, 2010**

OFFICERS

Co-Presidents:
 Ginny Ghirardelli 363- 6404
 Barbara Swift 342-3383
 Vice-President, Program Chair:
 Sally McGarry 342-9254
 Treasurer: Janet Law 671-4280
 Co-Secretaries:
 Anita Holcslaw 686-4085
 Caroline McVitty 681-6124

BOARD

Fund-raising: Donna Russell 837-7022
 Government Issues/Observer Corps:
 Joan Kinne-Shulman 842-9246
 Hospitality: Linda DeLuca 681-4969
 Membership: Ellen Forwalk 681-3096
 Newsletter: Bob McGarry 342-9254
 Public Relations/Publicity:
 Karen Wessel 682-3397
 Voters Services:
 Eileen Drehwing 681-4627