



Calendar

January 2015

Mon	5	LWVCA Board Meeting, Richland Library, Main Branch: 5:30 p.m.
Thurs	15	Public Policy Luncheon: Sue Berkowitz on "Fighting for Low Income South Carolinians – Filling the Healthcare Gap and Fixing DSS." See Details to the right →
Wed	28	Ethics Reform Panel Discussion 6 – 8 p.m.: Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce Bldg. See details on page 4
Sat	31	LEAD Day (League Education and Advocacy Day) Columbia (More in the Voter)

February

Mon	2	LWVCA Board Meeting, Richland Library, Cooper Branch: 5:30 p.m.
Tues	10	Annual Program Planning meeting. See details on page 4
Thurs	19	Public Policy Luncheon: Dr. Wanda Hendricks, African American Women in History.

March/April

Thur	3/19	Public Policy Luncheon: Dan Westbrook: Mistreatment of Inmates with Mental Illness.
Thurs	4/16	Fun & educational visit to the new planetarium and 4-D movie theater at the State Museum.



JANUARY PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON

Thursday, January 15, 2015 – 11:45 AM- 1:00 PM



**Lourie Center - 1650 Park Circle
(Pickens at Blossom)**

"Fighting for Low Income South Carolinians – Filling the Healthcare Gap and Fixing DSS"

Sue Berkowitz, Director, South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center



Sue Berkowitz is an attorney and Director of the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. SC Appleseed is dedicated to advocacy for low income people in SC to effect systemic change by acting in and through the courts, legislature, administrative agencies, community and the media, and helping others do the same through education, training, and co-counseling. She will speak to us about filling the healthcare gap

(f/k/a Medicaid Expansion or "ME") and the proposed restructuring of the Department of Social Services.

Sue has focused her practice in the areas of health, welfare, hunger and consumer issues. She has worked on the passage of numerous pieces of legislation, including the eligibility increase for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (2007), the High Cost and Consumer Home Loan Act of 2003 and the Family Independence Act of 1995. Sue works with a number of state agencies on policy issues that impact the low income community including changes to Family Independence, Medicaid and Food Stamp rules. She has authored defenses to the foreclosure chapter for a manual produced by the South Carolina Bar. Sue was awarded the Order of Palmetto and the Woman of Achievement Award by the SC Commission on Women for her work on predatory lending and poverty issues.

A catered lunch will be available at \$10/pp, or bring your own brown bag lunch. Email: sc.susanbjames@gmail.com or call 803-256-6822

All are welcome, but reservations for a catered lunch are required no later than Monday, January 12.

WHAT'S INSIDE? 

Program Planning	Page 4	Have you Heard?	5
Ethics Reform	Page 4	Board of Trustees Open Seats	6



Happy New Year! As we close out 2014 and as 2015 begins, it seems like a great time to reflect what the Columbia Area League has accomplished and share the plans we have to finish the fiscal year.

Reflections of Fall 2014 -

Voter Services – We co-sponsored and conducted a forum for the Richland District 2 school board candidates and agreed to be a partner in a voter advocacy network initiative sponsored by the State League. As part of that initiative I volunteered to attend and observe the hearing for certifying the election results for Richland County. A guest editorial written by me on behalf of the Columbia Area League on preparing to vote was printed in the *State* newspaper, and Rosalyn Glenn and I appeared on Meaghan Norman’s Sunday morning community affairs program to talk about the importance of voting and barriers to voting. Barbara Brown from the Sumter League joined me in passing out voter registration forms and voter information materials to newly sworn in citizens at a Naturalization Ceremony conducted at the Congaree National Park.

Public Education – We continued our long tradition of presenting educational forums on issues through our monthly Public Policy Luncheons. Featured guest speakers spoke to us on a range of issues, including the homeless in the Midlands, the scientific truth on climate change, and legislative issues facing SC women in making reproductive choices.

Membership – To promote involvement of current members we initiated a “Call to Service” to recruit members to actively participate in their League and we are working to resuscitate the LWVCA Speakers Bureau. Our annual member & guest socials were held in August and December and Suzanne and Curtis Rhodes continued the LWVCA’s Purple Martin tradition by hosting a pontoon ride to view the birds. To promote the League and League membership I made presentations on the League – who we are and what we do – for two community organizations. Marzi Knight and I also attended a networking event hosted by PASO to share ideas and engage in dialogue about improving healthcare access and outcomes for Latino families living in SC.

Plans for Spring 2015 –

Voter Services – As part of the State League’s voter advocacy network initiative, we will offer a regional voter education meeting in one of the Region 4 counties in partnership with local voter advocacy groups to educate voters regarding voting laws and their rights, to register voters, and to involve voters with the election process in their county.

Public Education – The Public Policy Luncheons for January through March will feature speakers on the healthcare gap and fixing DSS, African American Women in history, and mistreatment of inmates with mental illness. In keeping with tradition for our April PPL, we are planning a fun, but educational, visit to the new planetarium and 4-D Movie Theater at the state museum.

Membership - League Education and Advocacy Day (“LEAD Day”) will be held on January 31 and the biennial State convention will be held in April in Hilton Head. The Annual Meeting will be held in May.

Program – We plan to hold our annual program planning meeting on February 10. At this important meeting members will have an opportunity to suggest, discuss, and recommend League programs at the local and State

level. For all the services, events and activities we conduct or provide, in the end all of our success is a result of our members' hard work and support. You are the League's most valuable asset, and working together we can make a difference. Thank you for all you do.

Before I sign off, my very special thanks go out to Pat Forbis and her husband Joel for hosting the Holiday Member & Guest Social at their wonderful home. It was a great way to help celebrate the holidays.

Martha

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PROGRAM PLANNING - LWV Columbia plans to hold its annual program planning meeting on February 10 at Arabesque Restaurant, 2930 Devine Street (in same plaza as ZaZa's Pizza). Participants can order dinner and drinks from the menu and pay by separate check. Dinner service begins at 5PM and the meeting will start at 6PM. This year we will consider what, if any, state and local public policy issues we want to study. Formal adoption of a local issue for study is done by Columbia Area League members at the Annual Meeting in May. In order to guarantee that our program planning is genuinely grassroots, it is important that we have maximum participation in the process from our members.

BACKGROUND: In odd-numbered years, Local Leagues participate in the LWVSC Program Planning (alternating with LWVUS Program Planning). Local Leagues, however, can review existing positions and make recommendations on local issues every year. One of the highlights of the state convention in April 2015 will be the adoption of the state program that will set the course for advocacy and education in SC. At the program planning meeting you will be given the opportunity to review existing state and local public policy positions and to select the issues in which you would like the League to invest time, talent, energy, and money.

Barbara Zia recommends: As you do Program Planning for state/local Leagues, check out a new LWVUS study which outlines corruption in the states: <http://ethics.harvard.edu/blog/measuring-illegal-and-legal-corruption-american-states-some-results-safra>. Where does SC rank? Is there something your League can do? LWV Campaign Finance and Citizens "Right to Know" positions are tailor made for action.

Please make every effort to attend and encourage other members to do the same. We hope to receive ideas and full participation from League members.

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ETHICS REFORM PANEL DISCUSSION – Please mark your calendars for an important reception and panel discussion in Columbia on ethics reform, co-sponsored by the State League with the Columbia Community Relations Council, the Coastal Conservation League and AARP of SC. It is intended to educate both legislators and the public, and is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28, from 6-8 PM at the Columbia Chamber of Commerce Building. Panelists will be AG Alan Wilson, Senate Judiciary Chair Larry Martin, House Majority Chair Bruce Bannister, and House member Beth Bernstein.

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OTHER NEWS

**S.C. SUPREME COURT RULES IN ENVIRONMENTALISTS' FAVOR IN CAPTAIN**

SAMS SPIT CASE - Southern Environmental Law Project is savoring this victory, but the Developer vows to continue the fight in the Administrative Law Court, where the Supreme Court remanded the case.

Writing for the majority, Justice Hearn called Captain Sam's Spit "one of this State's natural treasures." The Court's legal ruling is [here](#).

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**CONSERVATION GROUPS REACH SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH**

CAROLINA UTILITIES ON NET METERING - Conservation groups, represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center, filed a settlement agreement with utilities and other intervening parties in the South Carolina net energy metering (NEM) proceeding before the SC Public Service Commission (PSC).

The settlement agreement is a critical step forward in implementing South Carolina's recently adopted Act 236, which laid the groundwork for residents and other nonprofits to begin to capitalize on the state's significant solar potential.

Under the settlement, residential and commercial utility customers that install solar panels on their rooftops before 2021, when the settlement agreement expires, will receive full retail credit for any excess power that flows back onto the electric grid, and will be eligible to remain on this rate until December 31, 2025 without any solar-specific charges or fees.

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MINING - The state Sierra Club took legal action to force stricter controls on the largest gold mine ever proposed for South Carolina, saying the industrial scale operation could leave the public on the hook for a pollution cleanup long after the mine shuts down. Elected officials have expressed their disappointment and have said the appeal could jeopardize jobs. See the full story in the *State newspaper* at http://www.thestate.com/2014/11/20/3823670_sierra-club-seeks-millions-more.html?rh=1.

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Board of Trustees Open seats: Various seats on the Board of Trustees for several of our colleges and universities, the Old Exchange Building Commission and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Senator Harvey S. Peeler, Jr. Chairman Senator Thomas C. Alexander Senator Robert W. Hayes, Jr. Senator John. L. Scott, Jr.

The College and University Trustee Screening Commission is accepting LETTERS OF INTENT to begin screening and qualifying candidates for the following seats:

Coastal Carolina (4 year term)

1st Congressional district - seat 1: term expires June 30, 2019
 3rd Congressional district - seat 3 - term expires June 30, 2019
 5th Congressional district - seat 5 - term expires June 30, 2019 7th
 Congressional district - seat 7 - term expires June 30, 2019
 At-large - seat 9 - term expires June 30, 2019
 At-large - seat 11 - term expires June 30, 2019
 At-large - seat 13 - term expires June 30, 2019

Lander University (4 year term)

6th Congressional district - seat 6 - term expires June 30, 2016**

South Carolina State University (4 year term)

1st Congressional district - seat 1 - term expires June 30, 2019
 2nd Congressional district - seat 2 - term expires June 30, 2019
 3rd Congressional district - seat 3 - term expires June 30, 2018**
 4th Congressional district - seat 4 - term expires June 30, 2019
 At-large - seat 12 - term expires June 30, 2016**

Winthrop University (6 year term)

At-large - seat 10 - term expires June 30, 2021

Old Exchange Building Commission (6 year term)

One (1) at-large seat - term expires June 30, 2021

Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School (4 year term)

Three (3) at-large seats - term expires June 30, 2019

** The election is being held to fill an unexpired term - service will begin immediately after certification by the Secretary of State.

It is required by law that any person who wishes to offer as a candidate for a board position must notify the College and University Trustee Screening Commission in writing of his/her intent to offer for the specific seat. For the seats elected by Congressional Districts all applicants must reside in the district for which they are applying.



THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING LETTERS OF INTENT IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2015 AT 12:00 NOON

Letters of Intent should be addressed to: Senator Harvey S. Peeler, Jr. Chairman College and University Trustee Screening Commission Post Office Box 142 Columbia, South Carolina 29201

The Letter of Intent may be mailed or hand delivered to the Commission Office - 213 Gressette Building in Columbia OR the Letter of Intent may be scanned and emailed to the Commission Staff - marthacasto@scsenate.gov. Questions should be addressed to either Martha Casto or Julie Price at 803-212-6430 or by email to marthacasto@scsenate.gov or julieprice@scsenate.gov.

Upon receipt of the letter, the Application Forms will be sent to the prospective candidate to be completed and submitted no later than FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2015 AT 12:00 NOON.

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Websites:

National: www.lwv.org/

State: <http://lwvsc.org/>

Columbia: www.lwvcolumbiasc.org

Facebook: *To see our Facebook Page:*

1. Go to YOUR Facebook page and search for the name Bria Tate. [This is the alias that will “travel” with the League’s Facebook page.]
2. Choose the “Bria Tate” with the LWV Logo.
3. Send a FRIEND request to Bria Tate and it will be accepted. You are then connected to the *LWV Columbia Area Facebook page*.

Twitter:

1. Go to YOUR Twitter account and search for the League of Women Voters Columbia Area and connect.

Facebook and Twitter email address:

leagueofwomenvoterscolumbia@gmail.com

VOTER INFORMATION WEBSITES

www.saveallvotessc.org

www.VOTE411.org



Columbia City Council

1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM City Hall
1737 Main Street Columbia, SC 29201
Check website at www.columbiasc.net for more information.



Lexington County Council

Meet: 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 4:30 PM 2nd Floor County Administration Building 212 South Lake Drive Lexington, SC 29072
For confirmation of meeting dates, please call 785-8103 or check website www.lex-co.com



Richland County Council

Meet: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 6:00 PM 2nd Floor County Administration Building 2020 Hampton Street Columbia, SC 29202.
For more information, please contact the Clerk of Council Office @ (803) 576-2060 or check: www.richlandonline.com



LWVCA BOARD MEMBERS & DIRECTORS

Officers: Martha Roblee – President, Julie Sellers - 1st Vice President, Sally Huguley - 2nd Vice President, Alan Roblee – Secretary, Rosalyn Glenn – Treasurer

Directors: Pat Manley - Director/ League Lines Production Editor
Bridget Tripp, Pat Forbis, Sarah Leverette, Pat Mohr, Missy Caughman, Rita Paul - Nominating Committee

Off Board: Chester Sansbury – Environment, Lill Mood - Transportation; Marilyn Knight - Outreach; Suzanne Rhodes - League Lines; Sej Harman – Communications, Susan James - Reservations; Pam Craig – Membership; Mel Jenkins – Voter Services

