



Calendar

March

Sat., 11: 10:00-3:00 PM. State Board meets at Grecian Gardens, All League members are welcome, but contact leaders if you wish to speak to issues on the agenda.

Thurs., 16: Public Policy Luncheon. Howard Duvall, Jr., Columbia City Council at large. See article at right.

Tue., 21: Conservation Lobby Day and Oyster Roast –See page [8](#)

Fri., 24: Deadline for April *League Lines* Articles – Friday, submit in word (not pdf) or jpg format to suzrhodes@juno.com

April

Sat., 1: Columbia Citizens Climate Lobby, 2:00-4:00 at Seven Oaks Park. See page [9](#)

Mon. & Tue., 3-4: First Annual WREN Summit.
https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wren-summit-women-in-the-workforce-tickets-31846273060?blm_aid=20484

Thur., 20: Public Policy Luncheon – Environmental update.

Sat & Sun., 29, 30: State League Convention Saturday and Sunday. *Democracy Pass It On* - The Inn At USC in Columbia [1619 Pendleton Street, 29201]

May

TBD: Annual Meeting

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MARCH PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON

Updates on Issues and Events related to City Government

Howard Duvall, Jr., Columbia City Council at-large member

Thursday March 16, 2017 – 11:45 AM

LOURIE CENTER – PARK CIRCLE (AT PICKENS & BLOSSOM STREETS)



THE MARCH PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON will feature **Howard Duvall, Jr.**, Columbia City Council at-large member. Duvall was with the Municipal Association of SC, serving first in 1987 as Director of Intergovernmental Relations and then as Executive Director until his retirement in 2008. Duvall spoke with us years ago as we were seeking improved City/County Council governance possibilities. He has agreed to present an update on issues and events related to city government at the Columbia League's Public Policy Luncheon on Thursday, March 16, at 11: 45 at the Lourie Center. Columbia League members will be interested to hear what has happened since the League adopted recommendations related to city government in 2013.

A native of Cheraw, Duvall has degrees in Political Science from The Citadel and an MPA from USC. Duvall is the author of a pending history of the Municipal Association of South Carolina. The book is written in chronological order to be useful in research. The City of Columbia web site offers more information about Duvall's extensive training and background in public service.

Duvall's passion for gardening led to his serving on the Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission for six years, three as the Chair. He also was on the board of Columbia Green, and continues to volunteer with Columbia Green Thumbs doing landscape projects around the city. His gardening skills are evident at his home, where he cultivates over 160 varieties of daylilies. Duvall is currently serving on the board of the State Retirees Association of South Carolina.

Duvall and his wife, Allianne, are active members of Trinity Cathedral Parish. He is currently the Cathedral Treasurer and has served on the Vestry. He has served as a Lay Eucharistic Minister since 1995. He serves on the pickle booth committee for the Trinity Bazaar where his artichoke chow chow quickly sells out.

All are welcome, but reservations for a catered lunch are required no later than Wednesday NOON, April 20, 2016.

Cost of lunch: \$10.00

(Attendees may bring a lunch)

Please RSVP to Susan James: sc.susanbjames@gmail.com

or call 256-6822

THE PREZ SEZ

Julie Sellers



JULIE'S JEMS - I hope I'm not jinxing it, but we have certainly had some beautiful weather. I don't know whether it is due to global warming or just a change in the jet stream, but I have enjoyed spring in the middle of winter. Of course, there is still a chance for a snow storm though. My son John had big rain storms in Anaheim, CA, last week. Pat Forbis who had lived out there said maybe California would become more like Oregon. John said that the drivers in the rain are like our drivers in the snow; there were lots of accidents. To top it off, I am reading The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History by Elizabeth Kolbert. I read about half of it years ago, but decided to give the rest of it a try. If you want to read a short sort of summary of the book, read "The Sixth Extinction?" In The New Yorker by Elizabeth Kolbert. (<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/05/25/the-sixth-extinction>) I know it seems as though I discuss weird ideas for a League publication, but this is one that the League is vitally interested in. Want proof? Go to <http://lwv.org/search/content/global%20warming> to find over 300 articles written by League members on the subject.

During this past election time period I learned of a new kind of journalism: "fake news". I knew there were productions like The Onion and Harvard Lampoon Parody with parodies and satires based on real and unreal stories. However, I had never experienced news that was knowingly false, printed as if it were accurate. (Hello, Miss Naïve 2017) Time and again, I heard newscasters, reporters, politicians, and critics state that the facts in a story never happened. Along with this issue comes the problem of governmental agencies not allowing reporters and others access to all the data that has been collected in a case. This second problem is discussed during Sunshine Week. The League's position on freedom of information is as follows: "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible." (*Statement of Position on the Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation, as Announced by National Board, June 1984*) (<http://lwv.org/content/citizen-rights>). Talk about League interest? Go to <http://lwv.org/search/content/sunshine%2C%20open%20government> to find over 1000 articles on Sunshine Week and open government. This year it is March 12 – 18. How do we in Columbia feel about these two issues? Do we know of any fake news locally? Has anyone that you know ever been denied access to files that a citizen should be able to see? What happens when a person is denied access?

On a more local level, I want to thank **Janelle Rivers**, helped by **Sharon Ayling**, for an outstanding job as leader of the Planning Meeting. I feel like we have a list of issues that we can discuss and plan appropriate actions that our League can do. We know that no one can be intensively active in every one of the issues, but we have enough to go around. At recent meetings both **Margaret Anne DuBose** and **Mel Jenkins** have suggested hosting discussion gatherings at times other than the Public Policy luncheons. Both suggested that such meetings should have lots of publicity in hopes of attracting League members and the general public. I think it is a great idea, but we will have to work on times and dates.

Additionally, our League held three consensus meetings to answer questions and help determine the State League's policy on Health Care. **Pat Forbis** chaired this committee. As usual she did not look for absolute consensus, but a feeling of consensus from the group. Pat's job was made all the more difficult because all of us have very deep feelings and personal stories about health care in South Carolina. One of the most often heard questions was "Why can't that (children's eyesight and teeth, well-baby check-ups, obesity help, etc) be a part of basic health care?" **Sally Huguley** reminded us that if we ask for everything to be included as policy, we possibly may not get as much as we hope for when we support health bills in the legislature.

On a personal note, I want to thank the Board for a beautiful succulent arrangement. Sharon Ayling brought it to me after my second week-long stay in the hospital. She also brought a wonderful homemade lentil soup. You will have to ask her for the story as to why it is her husband Bob's favorite soup. I am doing much better now although I get fatigued easily. We discovered that I have a terrible reaction to one of the antiarrhythmic drugs. I am wearing a heart monitor again, but they are slowly letting me take more of the drugs they took me off of. Thank you for all of your kind thoughts during these times.



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OTHER NEWS



RECAP OF FEBRUARY PUBLIC POLICY LUNCHEON



Wade Luther at the podium

Speaker **Wade Luther**'s presentation was loaded with important and interesting facts about current and upcoming traffic improvement possibilities. Probably the most fundamental challenge is that some of our serious congestion problems are limited by right-of-way width; thus additional lanes are not possible.

Luther, the Statewide Transportation Planner for the SC DOT (Department of Transportation), brought two colleagues, Mark Pleasant and Mike Sullivan, to update us on the Transportation Plan for South Carolina. The three had participated earlier in the day in a meeting with the SC Transportation Commission and department heads, outlining the goals and needs of the Department. His presentation was "hot off the presses," to use his description. Something most South Carolinians do not know is that SC has the fourth-largest state-maintained roads

system nationwide, with the State responsible for approximately 41,000 miles (54%) of the roadways. Most roads in other states are county responsibilities. The counties in SC are responsible for 44% and the federal government is responsible for the final 2%. The present source of funding for SC roads is a gas tax that was last increased in 1987. As you may have learned, salaries for DOT employees as well as road maintenance come from that funding.

The current funding for the roads is \$1.7 billion, and, as usual, we are top on the list for having the deadliest roads in the nation; 30% of the deaths are on 5% of the roads outside the urban network. For this reason the DOT would earmark any future increase in funding toward reducing that number. Another "pothole in the road" is over 400 structurally deficient bridges in the State.

It has been determined by the Transportation Asset Management Plan that only 17% of the roads are in good condition and most of the roads need reconstruction. To maintain the roads \$900 million/year is needed, and yet the DOT has only \$415 million.

Originally the DOT was known as the Highway Department, but the function of the department has changed in ways to enhance the broader transportation infrastructure needs of the state.



SCDOT Video Presentation

Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP) – makes investment decisions to correlate with infrastructure goals so that performance targets outlined by transportation bills are achieved.

Multimodal Transportation Plan (MTP) – which represents a vision 25 years into the future; it has an estimated cost of \$70 billion but the revenue estimate is approximately \$30 billion.

Road Data Service – is responsible for traffic counts and GIS mapping of road closures.

Electronic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (E-STIP) – outlines the State’s six-year improvement program for federally funded projects. This document is updated every three years.

Visit the DOT website at scdot.org. It allows access to a host of information including ongoing projects, e.g. road widenings, bridge work, etc. across the State. The link (below) to the SCDOT Electronic STIP. From that page, you may access project viewer and public comment sections. There is also a tutorial video which has been recently added, the State of SCDOT presentation, which was given to the Commission in February, can be found at <http://www.scdot.org/inside/pdfs/2017StateofSCDOTcentennial.pdf>. **Pam Craig**

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RESULTS OF LWVCA'S ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING
LWVCA members met at the Annual Program Planning Meeting to review the

positions and programs of the State and the Columbia Leagues. The meeting took place on Tuesday, January 31, 2017, at 11:45 at the Lourie Center. Twenty-seven LWVCA members met over brown bag lunches to discuss where best to invest our time, talent, energy, and money during 2017-2019.

Janelle Rivers, First Vice President, led us ably and efficiently through decisions on a multitude of issues.



Items related to LWVSC: The first part of our agenda was to make recommendations to **Retain, Drop or Reconsider** each of the following positions. LWVSC public policy positions are published in *Agenda for Action 2015-2017* and can be found at <http://www.lwvsc.org/issuesandaction.html>. Group consensus was as follows:

1. Child Welfare: **Retain**
2. Criminal Justice: **Retain**.
Questions/Comments: The group expressed concern about whether resources for treatment of mentally ill prisoners is adequate. What progress has been made? Does the LWVSC need to strengthen its stand on treatment of mentally ill prisoners?
3. Juvenile Justice: **Retain**
4. Education: **Retain**
5. Natural Resources: **Reconsider**. We voted to broaden policy by revising the topic to be “Natural Resources and Environment.” Further, we would like to include renewable energy and science-based environmental planning

for the effects of global climate change. The topic needs to include solar energy, industrial waste, chemical waste, downflow of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, including in environmental impact in neighborhoods, remediation, and ability to pursue reimbursement from responsible parties. We support regulations to protect citizens from potential damage from oil/gas pipelines, offshore drilling, and fracking. [Editor’s note: LWVUS policy addresses environmental and renewable energy, although it is not quite as explicitly addressed in the LWVUS policy. However, LWVUS policy allows LWV Columbia Area to pursue these issues. If we wish to elaborate our position, it need not require a study, just a Board determination].

- 6. State and Local Government: Retain. Questions/Comments: How can the state legislature enable Columbia to annex areas that are traditionally independent, but already surrounded by the city?
- 7. State and Local Taxation: **Retain**
- 8. Transportation: **Retain** with slight addition. The policy is generally acceptable, but repair of roads and bridges is such an important current public safety issue that it is worthy of specific mention.
Questions/Comments: 4a – add including roads and bridges and revise to include any tax, not limited to gasoline tax.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2017-2019

ACTION PRIORITIES: At each state convention, LWVSC sets action priorities to guide the work of the next biennium. Actual advocacy efforts are always shaped by opportunities and current issues in state

government, and the priority list is considered in that context. Listed in order of importance:

- 1. Healthcare reform
- 2. Ethics reform, including the role of dark money
- 3. Redistricting
- 4. Judicial reform, which not as high a priority as in the past

Local Priorities for LWVCA: Members attending the Planning Meeting identified the following three issues as local priorities.

- 1. Establishing an Observer Corps to be focused first on the Richland County Voter and Elections Commission, adding city and county councils and other groups as members are able to participate.
- 2. Encouraging voter participation in primaries and general elections.
- 3. Training for members and, possibly, even some events that could be open to the community.

LWVCA Action priorities for 2015-2017 were: 1)Voter Access and the Election Process, 2)Education, and 3)Ethics Reform.

Marianne McGrath

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NEW STATE LEAGUE STUDY - “PALMETTO STATE OF HEALTH” is pending. All of the leagues in South Carolina had the opportunity to participate. LWV Columbia Area’s involvement is headed by **Pat Forbis**, our Second Vice President for Women’s Health. Three consensus meetings were held in the Columbia area during the week of February 13. League members had the opportunity to weigh in, express concerns, and make suggestions. Discussions were lively and thoughtful. Many personal experiences were shared. A consensus of these meetings is being compiled and sent

in a report to the LWVSC to determine the League’s involvement in directing the discussion about the state of health care for all South Carolina residents. **The final Columbia Area report will be in the April League Lines.** For more on this topic, see February 2017 *League Lines*, or *SC Voter*, Winter 2016, or go to <http://lwvsc.org/files/HealthCareStudySep2016.pdf>.



Healthcare Consensus Study held at Lizard’s Thicket



Healthcare Consensus Study hosted by Pat Forbis (front left)

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MEMBERS’ CORNER

ARE YOU WANTING TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE LEAGUE?

NOW IS THE TIME!!

Treasurer **Ann Maletic** is compiling a LWVCA Membership Interest Questionnaire Talley. If you want her to chart your interests (public policy luncheon support, voter services, communications, membership, public relations, environment, public service, etc.) and share with project leaders, let her know. **OR – speak up** and reach out. Rana Davis (below) knew what she wanted to do and is already making a serious difference.

RANA PERI DAVIS, a new member who is now on the Board, has taken on the task of **updating our web site**. She needs your help! She is looking for copies of *League Lines* for 2016 & 17 to post. Check out and step forward! And thanks, Rana – our website has needed a “makeover” for a while.

OUR OBSERVER CORPS IS GROWING, and partnering opportunities are sought. The following is taken from the January Board minutes, with liberties: We are working on a fully functioning observer corps. **Rana Davis** offered to go to the Richland County Council meetings. **Missy** Caughman reported City Council meetings, on first and third Tuesdays at 2:00, are streamed on TV. Election Commission meetings are on Tuesdays. **Janie White** and **Janelle Rivers** will try to go to the election commission meeting. **Sharon Ayling** offered to attend some of the Lexington County Council meetings.

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LIGHT NEWS:

QUICK CIVICS QUIZ:

Q. What do Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Sunshine and the League of Women Voters have in common?

A. Sunshine Week - a national project that relates to James Madison's birthday (March 16th, back in 1751). Mr. Madison is often seen as the main designer for the *U.S. Constitution* and the push for the *Bill of Rights*. Mr. Jefferson is famous for (among many other things) his comment that "*the basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers & be capable of reading them.*"

LWV has been actively supporting transparency ("Sunshine") in government for a number of years. Here in the midlands, we have several members with journalistic backgrounds. How about if folks with that kind of experience meet for an informal discussion about media and "Sunshine"?

Mel Jenkins citycivics@earthlink.net
<http://lwv.org/content/looking-sunshine-protecting-your-right-know>



14TH ANNUAL

CONSERVATION LOBBY DAY & OYSTER ROAST MARCH 21, TUESDAY

(Registration required) 10:00 – Advocacy training at Capital City Club (1201 Main St, BB&T building - park in adjacent parking garage with hourly parking on Lady St and enter from the 2nd floor of the garage, then the Club is on the 25th floor of the building)

12:00 – Lobby: meet at visitor entrance on east (left) side of **the SC State House** (training participants will walk from the Club to the State House)

12:00 – Representatives convene in House Chamber (lobbying begins)

1:30 – Group photo on north State House steps

2:00 – Senators convene in Senate Chamber (lobbying begins)

Please note that participants are free to leave and eat lunch at whatever time is most convenient for you. A list of nearby restaurants is included in lobby packets.

****schedule is subject to change based on the legislative calendar****

5:30 - 8:00 – **Legislative reception & oyster roast at 701 Whaley St, Granby Room**

Attire: Please dress comfortably for a day of walking and standing. Most people will be in business casual.

We also need volunteers for the oyster roast, so please sign up if you can when you register.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/conservation-lobby-day-oyster-roast-2017-tickets-32050005429>

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UPDATE FROM COLUMBIA CITIZENS CLIMATE LOBBY

1.) **SAVE THE DATE.** Our next meeting will be Saturday, April 1, 2:00-4:00, at Seven Oaks Park [200 Leisure Ln, Columbia, SC 29210] Agenda and details from *Chester Sansbury* – csansbury1@sc.rr.com

2.) Consider attending the two-day **CCL Regional Conference** March 25-26 in Asheville.

<https://donate.citizensclimateeducationcorp.org/asheville/events/2017-mid-south-regional-conference/e116501>

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BOARD CONTACT INFO - 2015-2016 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE COLUMBIA AREA

OFFICERS

President	Julie Sellers	Jsellers13@sc.rr.com
1 st Vice President and Membership	Janelle Rivers	rivers12@bellsouth.net
2 nd Vice President and Women's Health	Pat Forbis	pforbis@sc.rr.com
Secretary	Sharon Ayling	rsayling@gmail.com
Treasurer	Ann Maletic	annmaletic@gmail.com

DIRECTORS/PORTFOLIOS

Local Government Director	Missy Caughman	mpcaughman@earthlink.net
Education Director and Web site	Pat Mohr	patmohr@mindspring.com
Web site	Rana Davis	ranadavis@hotmail.com
Environment Director	Margaret Anne DeBose	mabdubose@att.net
Voter Services Director	Mel Jenkins	citicivics@earthlink.net
Nominating Committee	Marianne McGrath	mcgrathlady@gmail.com
League Lines	Pat Manley	dancerpem@aol.com

OFF-BOARD COMMITTEE HEADS

Reservations	Susan James	Sc.susanbjames@gmail.com
Communications	Sej Harman	sejharman@att.net
Transportation	Lil Mood	lh mood@bellsouth.net
Membership Coordinator	Janie White	Jbwhite64@gmail.com
Environmental Liaison	Chester Sansbury	csanbury1@sc.rr.com
Membership	Pam Craig	Pcraig1@bellsouth.net
League Lines	Suzanne Rhodes	suzrhodes@juno.com

OTHER COMMITTEES

Nominating Committee:

Marianne McGrath, Chair, Pat Manley & Janie White

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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 begin typing "**League of Women Voters of the Columbia Area**" in the search box until a list pops up.
2. Click on the name **League of Women Voters of Columbia, SC** with the familiar blue LWV Logo on the left.

That's it!

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

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 **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

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