



Volume 9, No. 4

April 2016

**GCRWC 2016
Luncheon Dates**

- April 28
- Friday, May 27 *
- June 23
- July 28
- August 25
- September 22
- October 27
- December 1

For Reservations:

gcrwreply@yahoo.com

or call

Tracy Phillipott

864-420-6259

or go to

www.go-greenevents.com



*Note date change

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our website:

www.GCRWC.org



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Greenville County
Republican
Women's Club



April 28 Luncheon Meeting

12:00 Noon, Poinsett Club

\$18.00 Members

\$20.00 Non Members

**** LEGISLATIVE NOTES ****

Debbie Spaugh, Legislative Chair

Why doesn't the SC Department of Transportation fix our crumbling roads? One likely answer is that the State Legislature is holding our roads hostage in order to extract more money from South Carolinians, hence the push for a 72% gas tax hike (which is off the table for now). Another likely answer is that there is a lot more money to be made by road contractors and paving companies (which contribute to politicians' campaigns) by building new stuff rather than repairing existing structures. Consider the following:

1. South Carolina has the 4th largest highway system, over 41,000 miles of state-maintained roadways. Why does a state that is number 40 nationally in terms of size and number 24 in terms of population need the 4th most state-maintained roads? Perhaps it is because the SCDOT is controlled mainly by the Legislature, particularly a small group of legislative leaders?
2. SC legislators have decreased the state's road maintenance fund by 25% over the last four years.
3. Per the SC Policy Council, "lawmakers and the governor have funneled hundreds of millions of dollars to the unaccountable State Transportation Infrastructure Bank." The STIB only contributes to new construction projects. And, "the STIB has spent more than \$4 billion in only 10 of 46 counties." It is probably just a coincidence that 19% of STIB payments have gone to Florence County, home of Hugh Leatherman, Senate President Pro Tempore and board member of the STIB, who also owns a concrete company in Florence.

continued on page 2



Racine Cooper, 2nd Vice President

Our April 28th program (postponed from March) will be a forum allowing the five gentlemen running for the elected position of Sheriff of Greenville County to answer questions so we can make an informed decision in the June Primary. Constitutionally mandated, the office of Sheriff is the highest ranking law enforcement office in the County. We will be hearing from: Mr. Bruce Cannon, Mr. Hobart Lewis, Mr. Will Lewis, Sheriff Steve Loftis, and Mr. Sam Manley.

4. Senator Tom Davis, who lead the filibuster against H.3579 (the “roads bill” with the gas tax hike) stated, **“To raise the gas tax to fix roads, you have to be able to tell people that DOT already spends what it has wisely. It doesn’t. And you have to tell them that the money is needed. It isn’t.”**

Based on the findings of the Legislative Audit Council’s audit of the DOT issued April 2016, I think it would be irresponsible for the SC Legislature to pass the current Senate or House version of H.3579. Three of the major findings of the audit are: **1.** “South Carolina’s roads deteriorated significantly from 2008 through 2014. The department continues to add lane miles to the road system despite continued increases in the amount of lane miles rated in poor condition.” **2.** “...Changing the governance structure of SCDOT could promote greater decision-making efficiency, establish clearer lines of authority, strengthen oversight, and increase accountability.” Who is accountable for the DOT – the DOT Secretary or the DOT Commission? **3.** Over 25 percent of SCDOT’s funding goes to debt service and to other entities, such as local and regional governments and the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank, which use the funds for new roads or widening projects. A summary of the audit is at this link:

http://lac.sc.gov/LAC_Reports/2016/Documents/SCDOT_SUMMARY.pdf

On April 13, 2016, Representative Jonathon Hill proposed an amendment, Amendment 5A, to H.3579 which detailed true reforms: **1.** Abolish the Department of Transportation Commission and make the DOT Secretary appointed by the Governor be responsible for the DOT. **2.** Abolish the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank. **3.** Require transparency in all DOT spending and contracts. This amendment failed by a vote of 101 to 16. This is the link to see the 16 Representatives who voted to protect the interests of South Carolina citizens:

<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/votehistory.php?KEY=11392>.

Follow this link to see the video of Representative Hill giving one of the best floor speeches probably ever given at the SC Legislature: <http://jonathonhill.com/hypocrisy/>. Rather than pass Hill’s amendment, the House passed Amendment 1A proposed by House leadership, which offers little in the way of true reform. H.3579, with Amendment 1A, has been sent back to the Senate.

In addition to the LAC’s audit of the DOT, the LAC is working on an audit of the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank. Considering the weighty issues involved (public safety jeopardized by crumbling infrastructure and Billions of taxpayer dollars), wouldn’t it be prudent for the Legislature to wait for this other audit before passing any legislation?

Julie Hershey, 1st Vice President

Now that filings for local partisan elections are complete, we need to turn our attention to nonpartisan elections – namely, Greenville County School Board. It is important for Republicans to be involved in school board elections because of the fiscal and educational impact to our community. GCRWC will be announcing a new committee that will actively participate in local political races – the Grassroots Action Committee. More information will be discussed at the April 28th luncheon meeting.

“The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.”

Abraham Lincoln

CAMPAIGN NOTES

Janice McPhee, Campaign Chair

I am asking all Club Members and Associates to please make an effort to get your volunteer hours turned in to me. It can be a daunting process to do all of this in May of 2017. It really is much easier to do it on a month to month basis. As stated last month, you can keep your personal calendar and give the combined total of your hours worked each month for GCRWC activities/committees and campaign hours to me at either our next meeting, by email to jatmwgm@charter.net or by phone at 864-967-9618.

We will have a drawing during our June meeting to award the member who is up to date with their hours starting from July 2015 to June 2016. The award will be a free lunch at our next meeting in July. Please get your hours in and up to date so you can participate in the drawing!



Mary Beth Green, President

If you have visited the website of Representative Jonathon Hill, which is referenced on page 2, you witnessed a speech that many are saying is the best speech ever made in the South Carolina House. As Representative Hill points out, we basically have a governance problem and the roads issue is a symptom. When I read Debbie's article, the only conclusion I can draw is that our public servants in Columbia are better at building an intricate system to continuously construct new and often unnecessary roads, but is not structured to repair them. We must demand, as Hill suggests, that the current system be dismantled. I look forward to our Legislative Chair's further discussion at our meeting.

We are fortunate, also, that a timely gathering by the Americanism/Homeland Security Committee is planned that will provide a tool for us to actively participate in improving governance. Diane will discuss this in more detail during our April meeting. Headlining this month's GCRWC meeting we are pleased to continue to present candidates, this time for sheriff. **Besides becoming an informed voter, your attendance shows your gratitude and interest.**



Come early so that you will have an opportunity to meet other members and associates with like-minded principles as yours!



Diane Hardy, Americanism/Homeland Security Chair

Homeland Security and protecting our American values is critical if we want to preserve our way of life. To do so, we need to learn how to influence governance. Please join us for an event hosted by the Americanism/Homeland Security Committee, "WOMEN ON WASHINGTON DESSERT AND COFFEE" on **May 10, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.** at the Poinsett Club, 807 East Washington Street, Greenville.

We ladies have much wisdom and influence, but do we know how to use them in the political space? For instance, did you know that in 1787 Mrs. Elizabeth Powel was able to influence George Washington even though she couldn't vote? Chair Diane Hardy and committee member Stacy Shae invite you to meet with other dynamic women to learn how easy it is to harness that power.

Contact Diane at 864-356-8550 or email hardy5dc@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Dianne Mitchell, Membership Chair

NEW MEMBER TABLE - was a big success last meeting! So if you joined GCRWC since January and have not yet sat at the new member table, there will be special seating for you at the April luncheon. When you make your April reservation, please also email Dianne at diannekm@charter.net or call Dianne at 244-2717.

MEMBER DIRECTORY - Pictures will again be taken at the April meeting for our updated directory. Photos will be taken before and after the meeting so please allow some extra time.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION/SOCIAL - Thursday, May 5th, 6-8p.m. - If you have joined our club in the last 6 months, please join us at our New Member Orientation/Social at the home of Dianne Mitchell, 103 Sugar Lake Court in Greer. RSVP to diannekm@charter.net or call Dianne at 244-2717.

We still need help with the membership committee. Contact Dianne if you can help.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS IN MARCH!

Kelly Roberson Dobbs * Kenna Faber



SUNSHINE NEWS

Gayle Stanley, Chair - email your Sunshine news to t-gstanley@att.net

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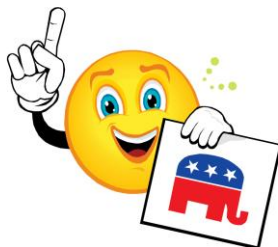
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The Elephant's Ear

Volume 9, No. 4

April 2016



April 28 Luncheon

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

The Poinsett Club

\$18 Members / \$20 Non Members

**Make reservations at gcrwreply@yahoo.com, or call
Tracy Phillipott at 864-420-6259 by Sunday, April 24.**

You can also go online to www.go-greenevents.com

Click the Greenville Women's Club link, and pay ahead of time by credit card.

Any lunches (including "standing reservations") not cancelled by noon on Monday, April 25th, will be billed by the club. Please be aware that once the number of reservations has been turned in, the club must honor our commitment to pay for that number of lunches. Thank you! ☺

Greenville County
Republican Women's Club
Mary Beth Green, President
117 Mitchell Avenue
Clemson, SC 29631-1533

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