



VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR DEMOCRACY

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE WORKSHOPS OFFERED

You are invited to attend the LWVNC Leadership Institute workshops being held on Saturdays in August in three locations in North Carolina.

They will consist of two tracks: one to introduce new and potential members and friends to the League of Women Voters and offer a skill building session on how to get your message out. The other targets current LWV boards and the membership on Building a Board, and Making League Positions Work For You.

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VOLUNTEER LOBBY CORPS IS OFF AND RUNNING

The plan to establish a LWVNC volunteer lobby corps in Raleigh has generated a lot of interest from our members, and several of those who live closer to Raleigh have already volunteered to attend committee meetings, monitor the progress of bills important to LWVNC, visit their (and other key) legislators, and send out email alerts. The goal is to have broad enough participation that people can work in teams, as their schedules allow, which will also increase the visibility of the League in Raleigh. To test your interest and spend an enjoyable and educational day learning the process and issues, we encourage you to attend a session similar to our successful June 8 field trip.

Vicki Boyer, LWV-ODC: *"A few years ago I marched into Washington with Granny D, for the cause of campaign finance reform. As we stood on the steps of the capitol building I realized that every American should march on Washington at least once in their lifetime as it makes you feel you have ownership in your government. (They may not do what you want them to, but they do have to listen to you!) I came away from our visit to the NC state legislature on June 8 feeling the same way. It is important for all of us to get a feel for what happens inside that particular building and the only way to do that is to be there. It is a very busy place but by appearances, everyone is cordial and friendly to one another. The offices allotted to legislators are much smaller than I expected. The building is complex, but if you get lost, everyone is willing to help you find your destination. There is lots of information available for citizens to pick up and take home with them. So I encourage all of you to take a day and participate in League's volunteer lobbying trips to the General Assembly. You will be glad you did."*

To learn more about the volunteer lobby corps, contact Mary Klenz, klenzm@bellsouth.net or Judie Burke, philjudi2@earthlink.net.

AND THE VIRTUAL LOBBY CORPS

As Judie's article above indicates, the LWVNC is initiating a volunteer lobby core. For those who can't go to Raleigh but would like to support the lobbying effort and get involved, we will be initiating a virtual lobby core.

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YOUR ELECTRONIC NC VOTER

At the 2005 Convention, a number of members signed up to receive the NC Voter electronically instead of receiving a paper copy.

Costs for the NC Voter are a large part of the annual budget. Every reduction in the number of paper copies that have to be printed and mailed is a saving to the League.

Save the trees, save the postage and minimize paper build-up in your house; call or email Betty Ellerbee and join the E-NCVoter corps! 1.800.851.8683 or lwwnc@mindspring.com

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LEADERSHIP INSITUTE

The agenda allows plenty of time for discussion.

Locations and contact for eastern, western and central North Carolina as follows:

Waynesville (in the west) Saturday, August 6

Location: to be announced
Contact: Kathleen Balogh, kbalogh@buncombe.main.nc.us; 828-251-6169
Carol Martin (Madison Cty); carol06200@aol.com; 828-689-5514

New Bern (in the east) Saturday, August 27,

Location to be announced
Contact: Carole Ellis, Cellis3@bellsouth.net, 910-791-0922
Audrey Albrecht, audrey_a@bellsouth.net

Central North Carolina – date and location to be determined

Contact: Mary Klenz, klenzm@bellsouth.net; 704-542-9858
Peg Chapin, Ehchapin@aol.com; 704-846-2540

At all locations workshops begin with sign-in at 9:00am, sessions begin at 9:30am, 12:30 pm lunch followed by networking opportunities (optional). A flyer and registration forms will be available via email soon.

All League board members are urged to attend along with members who want to sharpen their leadership skills. Invite new members and interested people to learn about the League of Women Voters and pass the word to individuals and organizations in your community who support what the League does.

This is another project of the LWVNC to build local Leagues and increase the visibility of the League of Women Voters. Contact Mary Klenz for general information on the program.

CIVICS 101-JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

Four Leagues: Orange/Durham/Chatham Counties, Union County, Pitt County, and Piedmont Triad have applied for and received a grant from the State League to host programs on the North Carolina Judiciary.

There is grant money left for other Leagues to try this. The advantages of doing this program are several. Your League gets exposure in the community as an educational entity. The employees in the judicial system are appreciative and helpful. There are other organizations in your communities with which you can partner in this endeavor, and that might help in other League projects later on, (e.g., your library or your local bar association). If your League is interested, please e-mail Carole Ellis at Cellis3@bellsouth.net and let her know of your interest and your questions.

VIRTUAL LOBBY CORPS

Continued from page 1

Following are the bills and bill numbers. Virtual Lobby Corps members will be alerted about their progress and at times in the process be asked to contact their legislators by e-mail.

If you would like to be involved, please send your name, e-mail address, and the names of your state representative and state senator to Robbie Wilmarth, rwillmarth@nc.rr.com or Peg Chapin, ehchapin@aol.com.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

HB1566 SB 1042

VOTER-OWNED ELECTIONS FOR COUNCIL OF STATE RACES

Public financing of Council of State races is needed. This legislation, when passed, would create a public financing or "Voter-Owned Elections" option for candidates for Council of State races, excluding Governor and Lt. Governor. Beginning in 2008, races affected would include: Attorney General, Auditor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Commissioner of Labor, Commissioner of Insurance, Commissioner of Insurance, and Superintendent of Public Instruction.

SB 539

JUDICIAL CAMPAIGN REFORM "FIX-IT" LEGISLATION

North Carolina has the strongest judicial campaign reform law in the country. However, technical changes need to be made to insure continued strong implementation of the Judicial Campaign Reform Act. This successful legislation got off to a strong start in 2004; now we have to make sure that the system continues to work and is fully funded for future elections.

HB 851

SAME-DAY VOTER REGISTRATION

North Carolina ranks in the bottom 10 nationally in voter turnout. Voter participation numbers are lowest among young and low-income voters. Same-day registration legislation would allow voter registration to take place during early voting periods (up until the Friday before Election Day) in North Carolina. Currently, the registration deadline in North Carolina is 25 days before the election. Many voters do not realize that they are NOT currently registered due to a change of address until after the current voter

registration deadline. This legislation could help to ease the need for provisional ballots to be cast on election day.

HB 6

LOBBYING REFORMS

Disclosure: Transparency in the lobby process so that all North Carolinians may participate in and understand the influences upon the election process.

Gifts, Expenses: Ban on all meals, travel expenses, tickets, honoraria and other gifts with limited exception for token gifts provided to all legislators that are valued at no more than \$25.00

Revolving Door: Enact a waiting period of 2 years before a legislator or state employee shall be permitted to work as a paid lobbyist after leaving office. 28 states have enacted a waiting period.

HB433

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

A bill to create a state earned income tax credit. Offers those who file a federal EITC a state tax refundable credit up to 10% of their federal credit.

TAX MODERNIZATION

NC, like many other states, is in need of modernizing its tax code to better reflect the shift from an industrial to a service economy. Many fear that without this change the state will continue to be unable to generate enough revenue to fund needed services. The LWVNC will be following this issue.

For more information contact Peg Chapin at 704-846-2540, ehchapin@aol.com or go to www.LWVNC.org

WELCOME TO THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY LEAGUE

Attendees at the 2005 Convention welcomed the new Cumberland County League and its president, Carin Savel who attended the Convention.

Newly recognized at the February, 2005 State Board meeting as a MAL, members of the Cumberland County League may have set a record for achieving full membership.

Congratulations to all the members of the Cumberland County League of Women Voters. It is good to know that the League is still growing in North Carolina.

2005 STATE CONVENTION REPORT

The twenty-ninth Biennial Convention of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina met on May 21-22 in Raleigh, NC.

Mary Klenz, Co-President, convened the meeting and introduced Barbara Volk as the Parliamentarian.

Delegates came from 14 local Leagues, including Asheville-Buncombe, Catawba, Charlotte/Mecklenburg, Craven, Cumberland, Dare, Henderson, Lower Cape Fear, Moore, Orange/Durham/Chatham, Piedmont Triad, Pitt, Union, and Wake.

Peg Chapin, Co-President, provided a short history of the national League of Women Voters citing major issues supported by the League through the decades (prompted by the Dare County Newsletter):

- 1920's: Maternal and Infant Health Care
- 1930's: Social Security and Child Labor laws
- 1940's: United Nations
- 1950's: Freedom Agenda and Civic Education
- 1960's: Civil Rights, Housing, Education, DC Suffrage
- 1970's: Presidential Debates, Equal Rights Amendment, Clean Water
- 1980's: Environmental Quality, Voting Rights Act, Reproductive Choice
- 1990's: Voting Reform
- 2000's: DNET and Online Candidates' Debate, Motor Voter Law, Campaign Finance Reform

The delegation accepted the **2005-07 Program** with the addition of an item recommended by the Henderson County LWV: *"To support the option for counties to elect commissioners on a partisan or non-partisan basis."*

There was much discussion about the wording of the **2005-07 Issues for Emphasis**. Several delegates wanted greater specificity while others wished to leave it more open for the state League to act on issues that arise in the next two years. The convention eventually adopted the Issues for Emphasis with the new wording:

*"Campaign Finance Reform, judicial independence, tax fairness, and other election-related issues including but not limited to:
Same Day Voter Registration,
Lobbying Disclosure,
Changes in the Electoral College,
Implementing HAVA,*

Public Financing of Council of State races."

Gray Newman of the Charlotte LWV proposed an additional **Position for Action** item to support HB 88 which would reduce the number of signatures needed to get a third party or independent candidate onto the ballot. This additional item was approved. The convention also adopted the 2005-07 Budget, the Budget for the Citizen Education Foundation and approved the Board of Trustees for the CEF.

Bev Kawalec, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of officers and Board delegates, and the slate was unanimously elected. (See the listing of officers and directors on page 2.) Mary Klenz and Peg Chapin recognized outgoing Board members Nelda Holder, Maxine Eaves, Diane Wilkins and Doris Naumann and thanked them for their contributions to the state League.

Chief Justice I. Beverly Lake, Jr. was the luncheon speaker on Saturday afternoon. His topic was the need for additional funding for the courts system. Anita Earl of the UNC Center for Civil Rights spoke at dinner on Friday evening, and on Saturday evening at "What News Do We Need" Rick Gall, the News Director of WRAL-TV, and Laura Leslie, the State Capital Reporter for WUNC Public Radio, participated in a panel discussion followed by a lively dialogue. Carole Ellis facilitated this event.

After Saturday morning's Plenary Session, well-attended workshops were held. They covered a range of topics: "Controversy, Visibility and the League" facilitated by Nelda Holder; "Lights, Camera, Action" facilitated by Peg Chapin, Judie Burke and June Kimmel, and "Voter Services, Anything New?" facilitated by Audrey Albrecht.

Some ad-hoc sessions were also initiated by Bev Kawalec for members on topics of interest such as information for new board presidents, and the CEF.

The convention ended with an address by the newly elected President, Judie Burke.

LWV 2005 COUNCIL

The national LWV Council is being held on the weekend of June 11 and 12. Judie Burke, Audrey Albrecht and Mary Klenz are attending from LWVNC.

Watch for information about the Council in the next issue of NC Voter.

LWV NC PROGRAM 2005-07



GOVERNMENT

- I. Election Laws
- II. Non-Partisan selection of Judges
- III. Making Democracy Work
 - A. Citizenship
 - B. Campaign Finance Reform (Issue for Emphasis)
 - C. Redistricting
- IV. Taxes

NATURAL RESOURCES/ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- I. Promote an Environment beneficial of life through the wise use of natural resources.
- II. Promote an awareness of the necessity for the fundamental change in attitudes about profligate consumption and disposal of material goods and resources.
- III. Promote the coordination of Environmental Regulatory Agencies
- IV. Promote high water quality standards and resources management through monitoring, watershed protection, regulation, groundwater (well-head and aquifer) protection, regulation, basin-wide and regional water resource planning, coastal water resource protection and equitable and adequate financing for enforcement of regulations.
- V. Support high air quality through control of pollutants.
- VI. Support property and other tax policies that would effectively guide development to meet human needs for the public good and would also conserve resources and protect the natural environment. Support property and other taxes policies that will promote the wise use of land to meet present and future needs.
- VII. Support a comprehensive solid and hazardous waste management program that will promote waste prevention, reduction, recovery, and recycling. Oppose the underground storage of hazardous materials. Hazardous waste that cannot be reduced, stabilized, or destroyed should be stored in long-term retrievable storage until adequate technology is available.

HUMAN RESOURCES SOCIAL POLICY

- I. Child Care
- II. Criminal Justice
- III. Education
- IV. Elder Care
- V. Housing
- VI. Women's Issues

LWVNC 2005-07 ISSUES FOR EMPHASIS (See Convention Report, Page 4.)

LWVNC 2005-07 ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Develop and carry out a plan to enhance the operating budget of the LWVNC.
Develop programs and work with local Leagues to develop membership and leadership within the local chapters.

PLEASE NOTE: MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM IS LISTED AT lwvnc.org.

LWV NC MEMBERS SELECT NEW PRESIDENT

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina is most fortunate to have Judie Burke as our new President. For the past 30 years Judie has been a part of the League; her history with the League along with her personal experience uniquely qualifies her to be our new President.

Judie joined the League in Baltimore County, Maryland, when she was a mother of young children in order to expand her world beyond the nursery. In the Baltimore County League she served as Treasurer, Finance Chair and Vice President as well as serving as chair of a state study on the preservation of agricultural land. In 2001 Judie and her husband moved to North Carolina where she joined the Orange/Durham/Chatham League and served as its President from 2003 to 2005.

In addition to her League involvement, Judie was employed for 15 years as the Director of Foundation Relations for Johns Hopkins University. Her volunteer activities include serving on the Board of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for fifteen years and Chairman of the Board of the Baltimore County Arts Commission for eight years. Judie has an undergraduate degree in Nursing from Syracuse University, a Master of Liberal Arts from Johns Hopkins and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Baltimore.

Judie's husband, Phil, is Professor Emeritus of Medicine and Oncology from Johns Hopkins University. Judie and Phil have four married children and eight grandchildren.

We thank Judie and all of the new officers, listed on the masthead, for their willingness to serve.

CONVENTION DELEGATES CONCUR WITH HENDERSON COUNTY POSITION

The State Board having approved the item to be considered for concurrence at the State Convention, delegates to the Twenty-Ninth Biennial Convention voted unanimously to concur with the Henderson County position to support the option for counties to elect commissioners on a partisan or non-partisan basis.

In 2003, the local league requested the State Board to consider the topic, "Exploring the Feasibility of Electing County Commissioners on a Non partisan Basis". In response to this request, the State Board suggested that the local league develop the research and reach a position which could then be considered by the State Board.

To complete the study, the local league partnered with the Institute of Government, the Association of North Carolina Counties, the National Association of Counties (NACO), the local Board of Elections, and local villages and municipalities of Henderson County.

Five different surveys were conducted. A total of more than 700 persons were reached in these survey groups.

- Persons who ran and were elected to a nonpartisan office in the last ten years - mailed forms
- Persons who ran for a nonpartisan office but were not elected – mailed forms
- Citizens registered to vote and randomly selected from all precincts in the county – telephone survey
- Residents of Henderson County attending 2004 Apple Fest – street survey
- Residents of the State of NC attending 2004 Apple Fest – street survey

In all five surveys there is a high correlation to support that more people would run for public office if the office were not partisan. Residents polled in the county by telephone (74.4%) and on the street (86.8%) supported the option for counties.

Given the status of a State position, local league members should now talk to their representatives and senators about the research, share a copy with them, and seek their support to sponsor a bill in the next General Assembly.

If you would like more information about the research, contact Lee Luebbe, (828.694.3710) or lluebbe2@mchsi.com

PRE-CONVENTION VISIT TO WOMEN'S PRISON

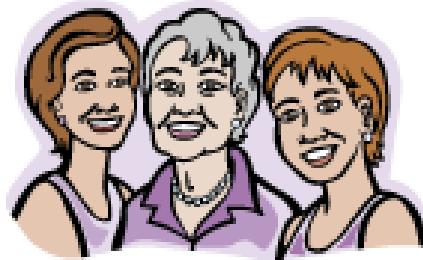
We were met by a petite twenty-something Program Director in flimsy high-heeled girl shoes, protocol at the top of her list. Were some of us not listed? Why then, she would have to get permission from the WARDEN. She did and was very attentive throughout the tour.

They hope to show visitors the many productive activities the women pursue. They must have a razor line to attempt as they guide. On the one hand, there are those visitors who wish prisoners could be punished unmercifully for the rest of their days. Most of us know cruelty will not send out livable people. How can the guides give us what we want to see? There is the license plate place, the infirmary, the dental factory, the cooking school in the cafeteria, and the most prestigious, working in the tourist bureau taking calls from people with questions about the State of NC. A crafts area allows lessons and produces items for sale.

It was not, as even an inmate suggested, SO BAD. But we could see on the large institutional campus, grimy brick buildings and muddy walkways, the fence and the barbed wire at the edge. The space, after several days or weeks for anyone, would seem horribly small. The sleeping/living quarters were grubby, dusty, smoky, and the guards, though not menacing, looked tough and ready. For what? Living in a particular area was attained by a point system. "Write-ups" would hurt a record. The inmates, in different colored garb indicating length of stay, wandered around, did one another's hair, sat, played cards. They are "not allowed" to have sexual relations with one another, but keeping them apart was a mentioned problem. There were, in my opinion, only two or three "pretty" women. There were many who were obese.

We heard from some prisoners as a finale. One, a woman in her thirties who had killed some young people as a result of DUI, one a sixty something who had shot her husband, and a twentyish pixie whose crime we did not know. They were all "lifers" because there was no chance they could live beyond their minimum sentence. The law changed in 1994, after which parole is only possible when the minimum sentence is fulfilled. They seemed nice people, which is no justification for crime, but many of us wondered what purpose is served to keep them there at a cost of more than \$30,000/year each? The DUI said it was nice to see our smiles since many visitors treated them as "zoo animals." I have thought and worried about them STILL there, after I have had a nice weekend, been all over the state, been free.

Audrey Albrecht



WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVATIZATION

An article in the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare VIEWPOINT discussed women and Social Security privatization.

Why is Social Security (SSI) so Important to women?

First, it has a benefit that lasts as long as you live – and women tend to live longer than men. Second, it has a cost-of-living adjustment.

Women are less likely to have an employer pension than are men. Moreover, when a woman does have a pension it is likely to be smaller than a man's because women are more likely to have a shorter work history and lower lifetime earnings than men.

How Would Privatizing Social Security Hurt Women?

It would replace the traditional benefits with individual investment accounts. The size of the individual's nest egg would depend on the success of the investments. And, the two longevity protections of Social Security would nearly disappear.

Under privatization, each individual is responsible for deciding how to invest funds from the individual account over his or her own lifetime. If the individual makes a bad guess about longevity, his or her money may run out. Likewise, if the individual has unforeseen expenses or if prices rise faster than expected, the assets may be depleted.

The current benefit formula is intended to ensure that the replacement rate, the percentage of workers pre-retirement earnings that are replaced by SSI, remains constant whether someone retires today or in the future ...currently 42% is the rate for a worker retiring at age 65. Due to the already scheduled increase in the retirement age to 67, the rate at age 65 will decline to 36%. Under the president's proposal, the rate would drop to 27% in 2042 and 20% in 2073,

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The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation of citizens in their government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership is open to all women and men who are age 18 years or older and are U.S citizens. Check out the membership information at www.lwvnc.org or email lwvnc@mindspring.com; call 800 851 VOTE or 919 783 5995.

Activities are funded through membership fees and donations. If you would like to help fund this important work, please send a donation to: LWVNC, 3801 Barrett Dr., Suite 104, Raleigh, NC 27609-7224. Checks should be made out to LWVNC. Donations to our Education Fund are tax exempt and checks for the Fund should be made out to LWVNC CEF.