



NC VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

**EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING
FOR DEMOCRACY**

IN THIS ISSUE

*Thoughts on Membership
Recruitment Initiative*
Page 2

LWV NC Secretary Resigns
Page 2

*Final Status of
LWV NC Issues
in 2008 General Assembly*
Page 3

LWV NC Council 2008
Page 4

*LWV NC
Has Multiple Voices
at LWV US Convention*
Page 5

2008-09 Calendar
Page 6

Be A Googler !
Page 6

State Board Liaisons
Page 6

*“A mere 88 years
since the day that the
U.S. Constitution was
amended to grant women
the right to vote! It has
been a wonderful 88
years of progress for
voting rights in general....*

*Imagine how proud our
League founders would
be to see an active,
energized, educated
voting public fulfilling the
destiny of the 19th
Amendment.”*

*Mary Wilson, President
LWV US, 8.21.2008*

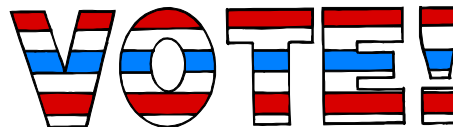
LWVUS ON VOTER SERVICE

CITIZEN 2.0 BY NANCY E. TATE AND MARY G. WILSON

The notion of redesigning U.S. democracy for the Internet Age is an intriguing one, probably with endless possibilities. But Americans use the term “democracy” to mean a variety of things. Some mean the election process itself. Others mean the ways in which our governmental system—with its three levels and three branches— operates. And others focus on the role of the citizen (and the public at large) in the process of engagement and self-government. All of these components have been—and will continue to be—impacted by the online world and the emergence of many-to-many communications.

We at the League of Women Voters believe that the most significant changes are those affecting the ways ordinary Americans perceive and interact with both candidates and government officials and institutions. And we applaud these changes. We are already seeing that the expanding possibilities for user-generated content online are providing new and positive changes for our democratic system. Here at the League we strive to empower citizens to “make democracy work” for themselves and their communities. The enhanced role of the Internet in recent years has helped to do just that. In so doing, it has increased the power—and expanded the responsibilities—of ordinary Americans. The potential is limitless.

*Essay published in The Personal Democracy Forum’s Rebooting America: Ideas for Redesigning American Democracy for the Internet Age; Editor, Allison Fine, Personal Democracy Press, 2008. To read or purchase the entire anthology, visit the **Personal Democracy Forum here***



VOTER EDUCATION/OUTREACH RESOURCES AVAILABLE ONLINE (NEW)

As you work on your Voter Services activities, keep in mind the numerous resources available on our Web site. Click on each item to access information: Newspapers In Education Institute (NIE) “Electing the President” insert, VOTE brochure in English and Spanish, “Your Chance to Choose” Video, Freedom of Expression Through Film campaign PSAs, National Association of Broadcasters(NAB) guide and PSAs, the 18-30 VIP (Voters’ Issue Paper) in English and Spanish, and the VOTE411.org widget. Also, keep an eye out for new resources which will be available soon.

CELEBRATING CREATIVE WAYS TO EDUCATE VOTERS (NEW)

Here are a couple of creative ways Leagues are educating voters:

Candidates Fair – The LWV of Oak Park & River Forest (IL) conducted a “Candidates Fair,” inviting candidates for national, state and county office to attend, speak for 5 minutes, and display their campaign materials at a local public high school on a Saturday afternoon 2 weeks prior to the election.

Continued on page 2

SUMMER, 2008

Officers and Directors

2007-2008

President Judie Burke ODC
 Vice President Brenda Rogers ODC
 Secretary Nancy Birindelli Dare
 Treasurer Betty Ellerbee Wake

Directors

Audrey Albrecht Lower Cape Fear
 Kathleen Balogh Asheville/Buncombe
 Kadra Bradford Pitt
 Carole Ellis Lower Cape Fear
 Beverly Hanly ODC
 Beverly Kawalec ODC
 Lousie Romanow Wake
 Fran Syptak Catawba Valley

Nominating Committee

Lee Luebbe - Chair Henderson
 Vicki Gehrig Wake
 Nancy Birindelli Dare
 Kadra Bradfird Pitt
 Ellen Olson Piedmont Triad

LWVNC

Office: 3509 Haworth Drive
 Suite 404
 Raleigh, NC 27609-7214
 Phone: 919.783.5995
 E-mail: lwwnc@bellsouth.net
 E-mail the NC Voter Editor:

Continued from page 1

LWVUS VOTER SERVICE RESOURCES AND IDEAS

“Touring with the Candidates” – The LWV of Santa Barbara (CA) regularly sponsors a program called “Touring with the Candidates” on their local public access channel. Candidates for local office are given 15-20 minutes of air time to “tour” the community with a local videographer.

EXPRESS YOUR VOTE INITIATIVE (NEW)

Overseas voters are often disenfranchised because their ballots are not received on time. The League’s partner, Overseas Vote Foundation, (OVF) has developed the Express Your Vote initiative supported by FedEx Express®, to offer discounted service rates to overseas voters shipping their 2008 General election ballots. Beginning September 15th in 89 countries, the project will utilize the latest shipment tracking technology to ensure that the ballots arrive quickly and reliably.

THOUGHTS ON THE MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

CAROLE ELLIS, CO-CHAIR

Having been at this for close to a year now, my co-chair, Kathleen Balogh and I see some truths that perhaps should be obvious. We have learned that the best way to get members is the one-on-one “ask” and that Leagues which seek to get new members involved right away are more successful in keeping members they do get.

Clearly, it is imperative that each League have the whole Board willing to concentrate on membership and that the Board does what it can individually and collectively to make new members feel welcome.

Equally important is having a membership committee that will follow-up on new members and other members who seem to disappear from view. The League is often focused on issues, but it is also important to focus on the social needs of our members - not in a big way but in a way that at each program, for example, there is time for people to get to know each other.

To build on our success, the LWV National office wants us to continue to work through the elections getting new members, and it wants us to use our usual election activity as a vehicle to recruit.

North Carolina has been very successful in the MRI initiative thanks to the determination and activities of the trial Leagues: Dare County, Lower Cape Fear, Raleigh, ODC and Moore County. Membership has increased in each of them. (Exact numbers will be available after the trial ends.) You can increase your membership, too. If you would like to know more about how the trial Leagues accomplished this feat, contact me or Kathleen or the Leagues themselves. See lwwnc.org for contact information.

LWV NC SECRETARY RESIGNS

Sandra Wright, LWVNC Secretary, has resigned from the Board effective in August. Sandra is a member of the Moore County League and will continue to be active there.

Thank you, Sandra for your many contributions and fellowship. Our best wishes for the future.

Nancy Birindelli will serve as secretary for the remainder of Sandra’s term.



FINAL STATUS UPDATE OF LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NC ISSUES IN 2008 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION REFORM

SB-1263 Election Law Amendments was approved. This bill:

-Creates an Election and Campaign Finance Oversight Committee. This committee is a permanent body (will likely meet monthly or bi-monthly) that consists of nine senators and nine representatives. The committee will be charged with examining all elements of campaign finance and election law and will provide a great opportunity to study Voter-Owned Elections in depth..

-Reauthorizes Instant Run-off Voting. Allows up to ten local elections (cities, counties, or school boards) to use Instant Run-off Voting per year in 2009, 2010, and 2011. It required local approval before enacting, a coordinated education campaign on how IRV works, and School of Government implementation of criteria used to guide IRV's implementation.

- Changes Judicial Public Financing. This section removes the 21 day ban on fundraising by non-participating candidates.
(From Chase Foster, NC Voters for Clean Elections)

HEALTH CARE

The Health Care Policy Council bills encountered tough opposition in the last weeks of the legislative session. At the end the bills had been weakened significantly by opponents, and in House/Senate negotiations the bills were allowed to die. The concept of the bill was rolled into the NC Institute of Medicine Access to Health Care Study Group <http://ncleg.net/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/HTML/H2688v2.html> with the Institute of Medicine appointing the members of the Study Group. Thanks to House Speaker Hackney, Representative Insko's hard work and the intent of the original Health Care Policy Council were preserved. A permanent study group has been created which is to make recommendations to the General Assembly on moving us forward to a system where all North Carolinians have health insurance. (From Evelin Brinich, ODC League Director and Point Person for Health Care on the LWWNC Advocacy)

DEATH PENALTY

Racial Justice – the Racial Justice Act (House Bill 1291) never made it out of committee in the Senate. This bill would have allowed defendants in

*The Legislative Update is compiled by Beverly Kawalec, Advocacy Chair of the LWV NC
bevkawalec@bellsouth.net*



capital murder cases to challenge their prosecutions on the grounds of racial bias (NC Justice Center)

THE BUDGET AND REFUNDABLE EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

The total budget (General Fund) is \$21.3 billion. Of this money, \$11.4 billion is for education (public schools, community colleges, and UNC System combined), \$4.9 billion is for health and human services, \$2 billion is for justice and public safety (including prisons and courts), and \$460 million is for natural and economic resources.

The state Earned Income Tax Credit will be raised from 3.5% to 5% of a taxpayer's federal EITC, but it won't go into effect until the 2009 tax year.

IMMIGRATION

House Joint Resolution 2237, No Postsecondary Education/Illegal Aliens, would have allowed the House to consider a bill to prohibit undocumented students from attending North Carolina community colleges or universities. HJR 2237 was not heard in the House or Senate.

House Bill 2717, Access to Higher Education, would have prohibited North Carolina community colleges and universities from considering a person's immigration status in making admissions determinations. HB 2717 was not heard in the House or Senate.

ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT

In the final hours of its legislative session, the NC General Assembly passed a bill establishing the Legislative Study Commission on Television Access to State Government which will likely explore policies to televise the legislature and other state branches. (NC Open Government Coalition)

Continued on page 4

ENVIRONMENT

One of the bills receiving final approval is H2499, Drought/ Water Management Recommendations, which will help strengthen North Carolina's drought response.

Another bill approved is S1967, Improve Coastal Stormwater Management, a compromise bill that strengthens coastal stormwater rules.

LWV NC COUNCIL 2008

BRENDA ROGERS

The Catawba Valley League of Women Voters rolled out the red carpet for our Council meeting in Hickory on May 30-June 1! The opening event at the Science Art Literature Together facility began with a reception, followed by a show at the Planetarium. After soaring with the stars, we toured the art museum and explored the gift shop before being seated among wonderful artwork for our buffet dinner. Many thanks to Fran Syptak and her League for hosting a won-derful evening.

Saturday morning we convened the business meeting after Mayor Rudy Wright welcomed us to Hickory. Eleven Leagues were represented at the meeting.

Beverly Kawalec, chair of the Advocacy Committee and Program Committee, presented the proposed change to the 2007-2008 program, recommending concurrence with the Leagues of Vermont, California, and Washington supporting instant runoff voting. The proposed position was as follows: "The LWVNC will support instant runoff voting (IRV) for all statewide and local elections." Don Wright, Karen Brinson (both employees of the State Board of Elections) and Beverly Cunningham, Director of the Henderson County Board of Elections, provided a balanced look at the pros and cons of instant runoff, a review of how instant runoff works, and a report on the outcome of the pilot program in Cary and Henderson County. The Council approved the proposed change Sunday.

Kathleen Balogh and members of the Leagues involved in the Membership Recruitment Initiative

shared what they have learned through the project, namely that we need to take every opportunity to invite people to participate in our League activities and to ask them to join our Leagues to support our goals.

Bob Hall, Executive Director of Democracy NC, and Damon Circosta of the N. C. Center for Voter Education brought us up to date on issues that the General Assembly is addressing during the short session.

We were pleased that Carol Reimers, board member of LWVUS, joined us for the entire meeting and provided an update from the national level. Judie Burke and Carol Reimers promoted the upcoming convention in Portland, Oregon, and recognized Mary Klenz, who is on the ballot for a LWVUS board position.

At our banquet Saturday evening, The Honorable Linda McGee talked about the success of judicial reform in North Carolina, which is a model in the nation for public financing of non-partisan judicial seats. The League has long worked in cooperation with other organizations in support of public financing for elected positions.

Beverly Hanly, chair of the Budget Committee, presented the proposed budget for 2008-2009 on Saturday, and it was approved in the business session Sunday morning.

The supplemental budget, which funds an Executive Administrator position, would require additional resources, and each League was asked to contribute one dollar per member toward establishing the position. Members of the LWVNC board have all contributed the equivalent of \$100 each to fund the position. The goal is to seek outside funds initially to supplement fund raising and endowment fund income in support of a part-time position. Council members asked to see the job description and to have a timeline for making the one dollar contribution per member.

Sunday morning ended with round tables for presidents to meet with Judie Burke, for local Leagues to exchange information, and for the representatives engaged in the Membership Recruitment Initiative to discuss their plans and progress.

All in all, it was a successful meeting with action taken on the program and budget, information gained from the sessions, and valuable time spent learning from other Leagues!



NORTH CAROLINA HAS MULTIPLE VOICES AT LWVUS CONVENTION

JUDIE BURKE, PRESIDENT LWV NC

Close to 700 delegates from 49 states gathered in Portland, Oregon in June to direct the business of LWVUS for the next two years. As in the past, it was four days of immersion in League program, resolutions, bylaws, election of officers and Board, and budget complemented by many optional workshops and caucuses. And, as always, parliamentary procedure prevailed.

We in North Carolina were well represented. Kathleen Balogh, Carole Ellis and I attended for the State Board. Individually and collectively we were featured in workshops on growing membership, managing volunteers and public financing campaign reform. Additionally, Sandra Wright and Mary Lou Bennett from Moore County conducted a caucus advocating a bylaws change. Lower Cape Fear, Asheville/Buncombe, Piedmont Triad, Wake, Charlotte/Mecklenburg and Union also had delegates in attendance. The capstone for North Carolina, however, was the election of Mary Klenz, former LWVNC co-president, to the Board of LWVUS for 2008-2010.



Of particular interest to our local Leagues as they plan their year's activities are the additions to LWVUS program: to adopt a Health Care program to educate members and communities in order to be better prepared to do health care advocacy as needed; to adopt a Multi-Level Education and Advocacy Campaign to promote solutions to global climate change; and to adopt a study item entitled "The Advisability of using National Popular Vote compact among states as a method for electing the President". Just as important, to our local budgets, was the adoption of the 2008-2009 PMP rate of \$28.00 and a 2009-2010 of \$29.20.

Outside speakers brought a broad perspective to their topics, which dovetailed well with new programmatic initiatives. The stage was set by The Honorable Barbara Roberts, first woman governor of Oregon, 1991-1995 who spoke on Women as Political Leaders. Global Climate Change was the topic of a panel presentation, and former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber, M.D. spoke on Health Care in the 21st Century. You can view his talk on the LWV.org website under Convention 2008.

This Convention report would be incomplete without recognizing the outstanding hospitality of the Oregon LWV, the majesty of Mt. Hood that you can see on a clear day in Portland and the camaraderie and good humor that was shared by League members from across the country. All of us felt a commonality of purpose – both newcomers to and veterans of a national convention

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NC
CALENDAR FOR 2008-2009
8/20/08**

2008

October 10	Position revisions completed and sent to Board for review
November 1	Board meeting
November 4	ELECTION DAY
November 8	Due date for articles for 4 th Quarter Issue of NC Voter
November 18	E-NC Voter released; paper copy to printer
December 12	Program Planning Committee report

2009

January 10	Board meeting
January 17	Due date for articles for 1st Quarter Issue of NC Voter
January 27	E-NC Voter released; paper copy to printer
February 13	Receive input from local Leagues on program
March 14	Board meeting—Nominating Committee, By-Laws, Budget, and Program Planning Committee reports reviewed and acted upon
March 21	Due date for articles for 2nd Quarter Issue of NC Voter
March 31	E-NC Voter released; paper copy to printer
April 1	Convention materials mailed to local Leagues
June 5-7	Convention, Greensboro, NC
June 13-15	LWVUS Council, Washington, DC

The calendar is also available at LWVNC.org

BE A GOOGLER!

The LWVNC Discussion Forum is a new way to communicate with other League members across the state. Find it at <http://groups.google.com/group/lwvnc>. You can contribute to ongoing discussions on election reform, environment, health care, tax reform, and the Membership Recruitment Initiative. Or you can start a new topic. Connect with other LWV members with similar interests. To join (it's free) go to **Members Only** on our web site, <http://lwvnc.org>. (look for the link in the black bar at the bottom of the web page.) Because this site is open to LWVNC members only, you will need to ask for and be granted permission to join. Once at the Discussion Forum, you'll get more information about League leadership across the state, and League logo stationery and business cards. If you don't have the id and password, check with a Board member or call the office.

STATE BOARD LIAISONS

At the August NC Board Retreat, each of our Leagues was assigned a liaison who will serve as a contact and resource for members of that League. For telephone numbers and email addresses, please go to lwvnc.org Members Page or call the League office.

*Asheville/Buncombe - Brenda Rogers
Carteret - Carole Ellis
Catawba Valley - Brenda Rogers
Charlotte/Mecklenburg - Fran Syptak
Currituck - Nancy Birindelli
Dare - Audrey Albrecht
Henderson - Beverly Hanly
Lower Cape Fear - Beverly Kawalec*

*Macon - Fran Syptak
Moore - Louise Romanow
Orange, Durham & Chatham - Kadra Bradford
Piedmont Triad - Betty Ellerbee
Pitt - Betty Ellerbee
Union - Fran Syptak
Wake - Carole Ellis*