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Immigration Study Report

Marsha Stickford, Chair of the Immigration Study Committee

UPCOMING EVENT:

Please join us for a moderated educational forum on the economic impact of Immigration, entitled "**The Economics of Immigration: Costs and Benefits**" on **Thursday, November 15th at 7:00 pm at the Calvary Baptist Church, 531 Haywood Road in West Asheville. (**directions below**)**

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – so bring your friends and share the information with individuals and groups who might be interested!

This is a topic that has understandably generated much of the controversy in the national and local debate on immigration, as the discussion that followed Professor Mark Gibney's presentation on the history of Immigration in September demonstrated. The aim of the forum on November 15th is to provide information related to the various issues and perspectives associated with the economic impact of Immigration. As with all forums conducted by the League, the forum is non-partisan and does not aim to further any agenda on this issue.

The forum will begin with Dr. Jim Lenburg, retired Mars Hill College professor and Chair of the World Affairs Council of WNC, providing background information on economic issues and trends related to immigration. Following this overview, a panel of service providers and business people will share their perspectives on the economic issues related to Immigration and reflections on their professional and personal experiences of the economic impacts of Immigration. The panel will include:

- **Bert Lemkes**, General Manager of Van Wingerden International, Inc. (former immigrant and now U.S. Citizen);
- **Eric Gorny**, local independent construction worker;
- **Dr. Steve Swearingen**, Medical Director of the Buncombe County Health Center;
- **Geneva Neeriemer**, Buncombe County Schools Director of Title 1, Migrant and ESL;
- **Rosario Villarreal**, local Business owner and Immigrant.

After the presentations Nelda Holder, a past LWV president, will moderate a question and answer period using questions submitted in writing by audience members.

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New Member Tea

Sunday, November 4
from 2:00 - 4:00 pm

at the

River Ridge Apt. Clubhouse

1906 River Ridge Dr.
Asheville, NC 28803
(follow signs to pool)

The New Member Tea is a great opportunity for new and prospective members to learn more about our League and activities and to meet current members. Please join us!

Membership

Individual: \$50
Household: \$75
Student: \$20

Member names and addresses are not given or sold to other organizations. We do provide mailing labels when we co-sponsor an event with another organization.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Each year there are a limited number of scholarships given to cover the cost of membership. In exchange for the membership we

ask that recipients actively participate in League functions.

If you know someone who is interested in League Membership and has financial need, ask them to contact Jean Parks,

jparks@grandcreative.com or
687-0109 for an application.

The League of Women Voters welcomes women and men who are interested and supportive of our principles and goals.

Immigration Study Panel - Continued from page 1



CONSENSUS MEETINGS:

This event is part of our local LWV Immigration Study's efforts to prepare our members for participation in the creation of a National League position on Immigration. Over the months of November, December and January, we will be sharing additional information and resources with League members to assist in this process. We encourage all League members to take advantage of these opportunities to become informed on this national issue.

In January, we will be holding two sets of Consensus meetings – one set in the late morning and the other in the evening. Each set will consist of 2 meetings and League members will be asked to sign up for one set and commit to attending both meetings in the set. The result of the consensus process is not a vote or total agreement on the different aspects of immigration, rather is an overall sense of the group's shared understanding of the issue. The consensus comes from answers to questions on which members find common ground and agreement. The Study Group determined that it will require two meetings for each of the groups to engage in the exchange of ideas and opinions that will allow the group to achieve consensus.

Two consecutive Mondays in January (January 14th and 21st) will be the dates for the sessions. Set 1 will be held from 10 am to noon on those days, and Set 2 will be held from 6 to 8 on the same days. In the December VOTER we will give you information on how to register for one or the other set.

Please contact me at 258-0210 or mestickford@charter.net with any questions about the November 15th forum or the January Consensus meetings.

Directions. From I-240/19-23 west toward I- 40 and I-26, take the ramp for Exit 2 toward West Asheville/Haywood Road. At the top of the ramp (at the traffic light), turn right onto Haywood Road. Calvary Baptist Church is located at 531 Haywood Road, which is on the right side at the intersection with Baker Avenue. Turn right just past the church building onto Baker Avenue and park in the large lot behind the church building – there will be signs and greeters to direct you into the Candler Center where the forum will be held.

submitted by: Marsha Stickford
Submitted by: Marsha Stickford

About the League of Women Voters

MISSION OF THE LEAGUE

The The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE LEAGUE

Membership is open to all citizens of voting age, female and male, who subscribe to the League’s purpose and policies. Citizens of other countries or those under 18 may be non-voting (associate) members. Membership in the LWV of Asheville-Buncombe County (\$50 individual or \$75 household \$20 student) carries automatic membership in the LWVNC and LWVUS.



Welcome to our Newest Members

Judith Hoy
j-c-h2005@mindspring.com

Kathryn Liss
kliss@igc.org

Barbara Abbott Segraves

Pinky Zalkin
lapinkster@gmail.com

President’s Report

Capacity crowds attended our Asheville and Black Mountain Candidates forums in October. The League received many compliments on how well run the forums were. Congratulations and big thank yous to Barb Panarites and her great teams: moderators- Cleve Mathews and Sonya Friedrich; timekeepers - Anne Higgins, Linda Brown, Sheila Franklin, and Barbara Segraves; greeters - Shirley Berdie, Sandra Abromitis, Barbara Segraves, and Karen Van Eman; runners - Judy Bissell, Karen Van Eman and Kids Voting students; question screeners- Kathleen Balogh, Beth Lazer & Betty Becker; sign in table - Jean Parks; printing of name tents- Marsha Stickford; and video liaison - Beth Lazer. (With so many members pitching in, I hope I haven’t missed anyone.)

If you missed the forums, you can still catch a showing of the Asheville forum on Channel 16 at 3:30 pm and midnight through Nov. 1 or on URTV Channel 20 from Nov. 2 through Nov.6th. The Black Mountain forum should also be telecast on Channel 20. See the URTV listings for show times. Tell your neighbors & invite them to ride with you to the polls on Nov. 6th.

I urge all League members to attend the second League meeting on Immigration Thurs. Nov. 15 at 7 pm at the Calvary Baptist Church, 531 Haywood Road in West Asheville.

The Immigration Study committee is presenting an interesting panel discussion on the topic “The Economic Impact of Immigration: Costs and Benefits.” (See Marsha’s article for details.) It is important that each League member take every opportunity to become informed on the many aspects of this complex subject in order to prepare for meaningful participation in the upcoming consensus meetings in January.

After this busy October, I’m looking forward to having a pleasant tea with you this coming Sunday, Nov. 4th. See you at the River Ridge Clubhouse around 2 pm.

President, Ruth Christie



Smart Energy Solutions

- Check your tires. Keep them properly inflated.
• Make your next car a hybrid.
• Call companies that use excess packaging and ask them to reduce amount of packaging.
• Recycle glass, paper, metal, plastic and newspapers.
• Pay bills online and go paperless.

submitted by: Leah Karpen

Immigration: Impact on U.S. Economy » Immigration Study Brief

12 The National Voter • June 2007

Historically, immigrants have come to this country for a variety of reasons, but economic opportunity has always been a major draw. And, the U.S. economy has not disappointed. It has accommodated an expanding labor supply that today includes 1.5 million immigrants per year whose spending on housing and consumer goods helps stimulate the economy and increase the demand for still more labor.

Workforce Shortfall

At a time when a “baby boomer” decrease is anticipated in the workforce, economists expect demand to create millions of new jobs. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 56 million new jobs will be created in this country between 2002 and 2012. During this same period, more than 75 million Americans will retire, and declining native-born fertility rates will be approaching replacement level. Various interests consider new immigrants a necessary labor source to meet this shortfall.

Costs and Benefits

Immigrants have had a profound impact on company creation, economic innovation and market value in the U.S. A *PRNewswire* article (November 15, 2006) reported that over the past 15 years, immigrants founded one of every four U.S. public companies that received venture capital. Forty-seven percent of current venture-backed companies in the U.S. have immigrant founders. Nearly half of the immigrant entrepreneurs surveyed came to the U.S. as students and started their own businesses within 12 years of entering the country. According to a Migration Policy Institute publication, *Immigration and America's Future: A New Chapter*, the number of Hispanic-owned businesses has grown at three times the national average, while the number of Asian-owned businesses has grown at twice the national average. Furthermore, the negative effect of authorized and unauthorized immigrants on public-sector budgets is small. Immigrant workers pay into social insurance programs, lessening strains on social assistance for the elderly. Many unauthorized workers use false ID numbers and pay Social Security taxes but are ineligible to receive benefits. Less than three percent of immigrants receive food stamps. Unauthorized workers support local school districts through property taxes, indirectly as renters or directly as homeowners. Taxes paid to the federal government and increased macroeconomic productivity result in a net benefit to the country as a whole from immigrants. However, studies indicate that costs and benefits are not evenly allocated locally. Communities face demands for costly services from immigrants, particularly in education and health care, which are not offset by tax income. But this type of financial burden is applicable to all low-income, uninsured populations—unauthorized, authorized and native-born. As Tamar Jacoby notes (*Foreign Affairs*, Nov./Dec. 2006), the additional state tax burden per native household is, on average, no more than a couple of hundred dollars a year.

Perceived Problems

Opponents of immigration often suggest that if employers paid American workers more, they could reduce the need for foreign labor. However, many industries cannot pay more, because they would be undercut by imports from abroad. Even in sectors such as construction and hospitality, where the work must be done in the U.S., companies must decide whether it is better to lure Americans to jobs that require lower skills than those that they possess by paying more for less-skilled work. Meanwhile, because they complement rather than compete with most native-born workers (this, in turn, attracts additional capital), immigrant workers are a factor in raising rather than lowering most American wages. For the past decade, market forces have attracted 1.5-1.8 million skilled and unskilled immigrants to work in the U.S. each year. However, annual legal quotas admitted only about a million immigrants, resulting in a significant imbalance. A realistic immigration system would make the annual legal intake more or less equal to the flow generated by supply and demand. The U.S. currently issues 5,000 visas per year to year-round unskilled workers, while 400,000-500,000 additional such workers are needed to keep the economy growing.

Disaster or Inconvenience

A legitimate way to assess the role and value of immigrants' contribution to America is to consider what would happen if

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EVENTS OF INTEREST

Immigration: Impact on U.S. Economy *Continued from page 4*

the influx stopped or if those already here left the country. Proponents of comprehensive reform (“bring in more workers”) believe this would be disastrous. In some regions, they contend, whole sectors of the economy could collapse. Opponents maintain that a cut-off would mean, at most, a temporary inconvenience for a few employers, who would soon wean themselves away from their dependence on foreign workers. Whichever path is chosen, there is one certainty: the consequences will affect everyone.

This brief is based on two LWVUS Immigration Study Committee background papers, “Immigration and the Economy” by Chris Carson and “Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration” by Dorrit Marks. These papers, including full citations of sources, are available at www.lwv.org.



ASHEVILLE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES FORUM

*Moderator
Cleve Mathews*



A Night at the Show



If you enjoy going to the theater and supporting the Florence Ryan Fund of the Asheville Buncombe County League of Women Voters, you are invited to attend a show in February. The League is preparing a night out, where members can invite friends and enjoy local theater. A portion of the ticket sales will benefit the Florence Ryan Fund. If you would like to attend, but need a ride, there will be carpools available. More information will be coming in the next Voter. Our appreciation goes to Hal Hogstrum for organizing our gathering.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FOR THE LEAGUE'S HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



WITH OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS
HONORING THEIR PUBLIC SERVICE.

ON DEC. 14TH
5:30-7:00 PM

AT
CROWFIELD'S CLUBHOUSE,
1745 HENDERSONVILLE RD

Please consider volunteering for this festive event:

- Help with set-up (arrive by 4:45)
- Help with clean-up (stay until 7:45)
- Serve beverages: wine or punch

Members, please bring finger-food either sweet or savory.

Contact Grace Curry at 254-3924 or gracecurry1@charter.net.

In order to cover rental and beverage costs, members are asked to consider making a \$5 contribution.



Vote Smart Bus Stops at UNCA

It was a delightful fall day for the VOTE SMART bus stop at the UNCA parking lot Oct. 27. The tailgate market was bustling, and many of the shoppers were intrigued by the big, colorful VOTE SMART bus. About 40 of them toured the bus & watched the VOTE SMART video. Another 200 or so took home the VOTE SMART “Voters’ Self-Defense Manual”. Many stopped by the LWV-A/BC table. Only a couple required information about registering to vote. However, the morning did provide good exposure for League. Thank you Judith Hoy & Bob Dubrul for bringing the bus to Asheville, and thank you Hal Hogstrom, Leah Karpen, Shirley Berdie, Barbara Segraves, and Judy Bissell for staffing the League table.

submitted by: Ruth Christie

THE VOTER



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LEAGUE CALENDAR 2007-2008

NOVEMBER

New Member Tea - Sunday, 2:00 - 4:00 at the River Ridge Club House (follow signs to the pool)Nov 4

Economic Impact of Immigration, Costs & Benefits, Calvary Baptist Church 531 Haywood Rd., W. Asheville, Thursday, 7 pm Nov. 15

DECEMBER

Holiday Party at Crowfield's Club House, Honoring the public service of our elected officials. Friday, 5:30 - 7:00 pm ... Dec 14

JANUARY 2008

Consensus meeting for League members on Immigration Study. Members have a choice of morning or early evening meeting Mon, 10am or 6pm Jan 14 & 21

FEBRUARY 2008

Program Planning Mtg - Potluck at the YWCA 5:30 Feb 25

Members Theater Night - Members will be invited to attend a night at the Theater while supporting the League mid - late Feb

MAY

Annual Meeting - 5:30 May 19

Board Meetings @ YWCA, 5 pm,
4th Tues of the month
except December.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Election Day- Nov 6

Election Trivia

- a. Which presidential ticket was referred to by supporters as "Grits and Fritz"?
- b. The slogan 'A chicken in every pot and a car in every garage' is identified with which presidential candidate?
- c. Supporters of this candidate go "Clean for Gene".

The League of Women Voters
of Asheville-Buncombe County
P . O . B o x 8 2 9 2
A s h e v i l l e , N C 2 8 8 1 4
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Answers to Trivia: a. Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale; b. Herbert Hoover's 1928 pres. campaign; c. Eugene McCarthy