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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.

Candidate Forums:

Monday, October 20, 7:00- 9:00 pm County Commissioner and Commission Chairman Candidates' Forum

The forum will be held at the Randolph Learning Center, 90 Montford Ave., just north of the new Chamber of Commerce Building. Convenient location with free parking. Nelda Holder will moderate.

Monday, October 27, 7:00-9:00 pm Forum for NC Senate and House Candidates.

The forum will be held at the Randolph Learning Center. Come ready with your questions on the state issues of most concern to you.

Additional co-sponsors for both forums will be announced in the next issue. Thanks to Yvette Wessel, Shirly Birdie, Karen VanEman, Judy Bissell, Beth Lazer, BJ Snow, Pat Wille, Janie Wilson, and Anne Higgins for organizing these events.



Observer Report

Metropolitan Sewerage District

Board Meeting
August 20, 2008

Absent were David Gantt and Stephen Metcalf. The Board approved a salary increase of 7% with a bonus of \$4,000 for General Manager Tom Hartje, as recommended by the Personnel Committee. The Committee had previously reviewed goals and accomplishments of the past year. The Board approved a mutual aid and emergency assistance agreement for North Carolina Water and Wastewater agencies, subject to wording changes suggested by Counsel William Clark. The General Manager presented a summary of fuel usage, costs, and efficiency measures.

The Master Plan is on schedule for completion. Consolidated Motion Agenda included condemnations recommended by the Right of Way Committee as well as acceptance of several developer-constructed sewer systems. Bids for repairs and upgrades were awarded to low bidder.

Following the business session, John Kiaviniemi, Director of Water Reclamation, made an excellent visual and oral presentation on the Water Reclamation Division [previously known as sewerage division]. Wastewater now is considered a resource. The treatment plant runs continuously and has 30 remote pumping stations. Sludge is dewatered, compressed and incinerated with special attention to air quality. John made frequent reference to the ability and commitment of his staff. The SCADA system is in use for communications and process control. This presentation would be of interest to other groups and, in addition, plant tours are possible.

submitted by: Leah Karpen, Observer

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Officers and Board 2008-2009

President / Vice President - By
Executive Committee consisting of
members with (*)
*Ruth Christie - Treasurer
*Linda Brown - Recording Secretary
*Jean Parks - Membership
Nina Accardo - Voter Enfranchisement
*Anne Higgins - Voter Editor
Open - Programming
Yvette Wessel - Civic Education
(Forums)
Karen VanEman - At Large

Nominating Committee

Grace Curry - Chairman
Marsha Stickford - Member
Pat Wille - Member
Sandra Abromitis - Member
Linda Brown - Member

Off Board Appointments

Betty Becker - Office Phone
Nancy Patterson - Web Page
Kathleen Balogh - E-mail contacts
Grace Curry - Hospitality/Phone
Fran Myers - Corresponding Secretary
Jack Saye - Newsclippings
Sandra Abromitis - Press Release
Editor
Barbara Segraves - Programming
Jane Wilson - Forums
Sally Boerschig - Voter Issues

Minutes of the LWV-A/BC Board meeting Aug 26, 2008, 6:15 pm at YWCA –

Submitted by Linda Brown. Chaired by Jean Parks. Board members present - Ruth Christie, Treasurer; Linda Brown, Recording Secretary; Jean Parks, Membership; Yvette Wessel – Civic Education (candidate forums); Barb Panarites – Liaison with state and national Leagues; Karen VanEman - Board member at large. Unable to attend - Anne Higgins, Editor of *The Voter*; Nina Accardo – Voter Services (voter registration); Sandra Abromitis – Public Relations

Minutes of July 29 Board Retreat – Linda Brown Minutes of the July 29 Retreat were accepted as presented (Ruth, Barb). After each meeting, Linda will send the minutes to the Board and they will make changes within 48 hours. Linda will then send the minutes to Anne Higgins, Editor of *The Voter*.

Treasurer's report – Ruth Christie **Review of year-end financial reports:** The League is in great financial shape. As of June 30, 2008, the League had \$6,639.14 in checking, \$1,236.72 in a Money Market account, and \$5,155.81 in a CD. Thanks to Anne Higgins's Silent Auction, we raised \$509 at the Annual Meeting in May. Thanks to our members, 40% of 2008-2009 dues were paid at the Annual Meeting. During the year, we lowered our overhead – that is, we no longer have an office. The Florence Ryan Educational Fund (FREF) is also doing well. As of June 30, 2008, FREF had \$2,371.43 in checking and a \$10,311.62 CD. Accepted (Yvette, Karen).

Monthly expense report: In July, Ruth Christie paid per member dues to the national in the amount of \$2,520 and \$1,110 to the state. Accepted (Yvette, Karen).

Scholarship: A scholarship was given to a League member who is an active volunteer. This required transferring \$35 from FREF to the League account. (Karen, Barb)

Money Market Account: It was suggested we close the MM account and invest in an Accelerated CD. This was tabled until the next meeting.

Training on QuickBooks: Ruth Christie is trained in QuickBooks Pro, but our software is QuickBooks for Nonprofits. Voted: From the contingency fund, the League will pay up to three hours @ \$40 an hour, for Ruth to be trained on the new software. (Karen, Barb)

Internal Controls Policy/Procedures: Tabled.

Old Business:

Update on the Parkside forum – Linda Brown. Nelda Holder is a former president of the League and a current editor at Mountain Xpress. Over the summer, she proposed that the two organizations sponsor a forum on the Parkside controversy. From the League, Ruth Christie, Jean Parks, Linda Brown, and Beth Lazer (the proposed moderator) met with Nelda Holder at *Mountain Xpress*. After several weeks of meetings, it turned out that the developer and government officials made themselves unavailable for such a form – that is, Stewart Coleman, Mayor Terry Bellamy, Nathan Ramsey, and even Pack Square Conservancy. On Wednesday,

Aug. 27, *Mountain Xpress* was to publish a commentary on this situation.

Filling a vacancy on the Board – Jean Parks Due to the resignation of Dorothy Rohner, the Board will have to fill her seat on the Board. Voted: Sandra Abromitis and Linda Brown were appointed, as Board members, to the Nominating Committee. The Board will ask the Nominating Committee to recommend a replacement for Dorothy, to serve till next Annual Meeting. (Ruth, Jean)

Spokesperson for the League – Ruth Christie. Voted: Ruth Christie will be the sole spokesperson for the League. She will be the person who puts her name to a position of the League, a letter to the editor in the name of the League, and speaks at hearings in the name of the League. (Linda, Yvette)

Nonpartisan policy revision: – Ruth Christie. The Board endorsed a new policy. (Jean, Karen)

Calendar:

New Member Tea – Sunday, Nov. 9 The Board is seeking a pleasant spot. At the last meeting, Nina Accardo suggested the Princess Anne Hotel.

Party to honor elected officials – In January, date to be announced. Yvette Wessel will ask Blue Spiral if we can hold it there. Its owner, John Cram, is a financial supporter of the League.

Theater Party – In February, date to be announced. It will be a fund-raiser.

Annual Meeting – In May, date to be announced.

Webpage – Jean Parks; Nancy Patterson is in the process of drafting the content for the League website. We must make sure that our local mission statement fits that of the national. We will list the candidates, but if a candidate has “no official website,” that will be stated in those words. The Board will examine the new website before it replaces the old.

URTV -- Tabled.

Committee Reports

Membership – Jean Parks; There have been no membership renewals this month. While 40% have renewed, 60% have not. Jean will mail a reminder. If necessary, Linda offered to develop a phone tree. Anne will put a renewal form in this month's *Voter*.

The Fall Forums – Yvette Wessel; The Forum Committee has received responses from every candidate. There will be two forums. October 20: County Commission, including the two running for Chair. October 27: State House and Senate. For both forums, the League will be listed as one of many co-sponsors, including Children First, Manna Food Bank, United Way, Christians for a United Community, Kids Voting, and *Mountain Xpress*. According to John Hayes, the NAACP might be a sponsor – that is, the forums may be listed as “in collaboration with” the NAACP. Jean Larson, co-chair of the NAACP's political action committee, will get back to Yvette Wessel. Beth Lazer is asking Leadership Asheville and the Center for Creative Retirement to be co-sponsors. Nina Accardo will provide the Forum committee with the name and phone number of a contact with NAMI (National Association for the Mentally Ill) to be a co-sponsor. The Forum Committee will consider allowing co-sponsors to have tables with their literature. Thanks to Kids Voting, middle school students will serve as ushers. They have developed some questions for the candidates. Ann Raybon volunteered her grandson to tape both forums and that she would see that they are aired on URTV.

While they may not be professional, they will be free. Yvette Wessel will ask Ms. Raybon if any of her videos have been aired on URTV. Thanks to *Mountain Xpress*, there will be two free ads (October 8 and 15) advertising the forums. Children First is sending out a questionnaire to candidates for County Commission and Commission chairperson, plus the Board of Education, Senate Districts 48 and 49, and House Districts 114, 115, and 116. Yvette Wessel has a copy of the questions, all of which deal with aspects of education and child care policy. The responses should all be in by the middle of September. Children First will compile and make them available to us. Yvette Wessel is meeting with Greg Borom next week to finalize plans. He has sent some questions that Yvette would like to discuss with the Board. As yet, it does not appear that there will be a Judicial candidates' forum. Judge Sharon Barrett suggested the only hope we might have to lure the candidates, none of whom are local, would be to schedule the forum on Thursday, October 2 before the Vance-Aycock Weekend held annually at the Grove Park Inn. But there has been no word from Patsy Brison, head of the local bar association. Susan Dotson-Smith, head of the NC Association of Women Attorneys, sent an e-mail to Patsy Brison backing our request. Lee Smith estimated a cost of \$500 for taping the forum. It is unclear whether the Henderson County League will sponsor a debate between Congressman Heath Shuler and Carl Mumpower. The Asheville League might co-sponsor to the extent of arranging coverage by WLOS. Judy Bissell contacted Mr. Beatty, the producer at WLOS. He requested we send a proposal to Ms. Fries. This was done on Aug. 15, but we have not received a response. Yvette Wessel will contact Sandra Abromitis, who is in charge of publicity. (Sandra is recovering from knee surgery.) The next meeting of the Forum Committee will be on September 15 at 3:30 at the home of Shirley Berdie.

A recruiting speech at each forum: Ruth Christie raised questions about the League having a recruiting speech at the forums (a League member telling a short, personal story of why he/she joined and inviting those present to join the League). Karen and Ruth cited one document, *League Basics*, which states that League chapters cannot recruit members at forums “hosted by education funds.” Barb pointed out that that document contradicted numerous messages in *Leaders Updates* urging chapters to recruit at all elections events. Ruth said she would seek clarification.

[The following day, Ruth found clarification in an October 2005 letter from the national to chapter presidents: “The important distinction here is that your League is hosting the event; the education fund is not hosting the event itself. Education funds should almost always sponsor events and projects through Leagues. The League is not well served when education funds directly sponsor events and projects themselves.” In other words, there are no limitations on League recruitment efforts as long as the League is the host of the event.] The Board postponed until the next Board meeting a decision as to whether or not to include recruitment at the forums.

New Business

Election Bulletin; In the past, the League has published an election bulletin in the *Asheville Citizen-Times*. When the newspaper changed management, it stopped cooperating with the League on this project. Ruth Christie suggested we do it online, but worried that candidates (who receive many questionnaires) might not respond to ours. Linda Brown suggested that at the Forums, we ask three basic questions of all the candidates, and then publish their answers on the website. Linda Brown and Pat Wille will investigate this possibility.

NEXTBOARDMEETING

Tuesday, September 23 at 6 pm at the YWCA. Ruth Christie will chair.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 pm

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.

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.

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

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.

Women's Agenda Event

The Buncombe County Women's Commission will hold the 2008 Women's Agenda Event on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2008, 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the Asheville YWCA, 185 S. French Broad Ave. Free childcare will be provided. Call Jenny Sliker for reservations at 254-7206. Call Sandra Abromitis at 686-8281 for registration of the event before September 10, 2008.

The Women's Agenda becomes a critical part of the NC legislative/budget review. Please come and make your voice heard. The program will include Dr. Betty Young, President of A-B Tech, as well as other women working on legislative issues.

Fiesta Latina

Fiesta Latina - October 11-12 at the Agricultural Center. Nina Accardo is looking for volunteers to help register voters and promote the Spanish version of the BC Board of Elections *2008 Voting Guide* translated by the LWV. Anyone bilingual? Please contact Nina at 275-7052.

Nuclear Weapons and the Human Future

Interested in nuclear issues? On September 10 the film "Nuclear Weapons and the Human Future" will be shown at Congregation Beth ha Tephila, Liberty and Broad Streets, sponsored by the Social Justice Committee of the Congregation, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and the Center for Diversity Education. Bring your friends and a bag supper at 6:00 p.m.; coffee and tea will be available. The film will be shown at 6:30 p.m., followed by discussion. There is no fee and reservations are not required. For more information call Leah Karpen at 254-5489.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Membership Renewal Time

Almost half of our members have renewed their membership for 2008-2009. If you haven't, please complete the form printed in this Voter and mail it with your dues to LWV-ABC, PO Box 8292, Asheville, NC 28814. Thank you for your continued support!

New Members

Jerry VanEman

Yvette Wessell

MEMBERSHIP FORM for 2008-2009

League of Women Voters Asheville/Buncombe County

P.O. Box 8292

Asheville, NC 28814

828-258-8223

<http://www.main.nc.us/lwv>

New application ____ or Renewal ____

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (h) _____ (w) _____ (cell) _____

e-mail _____ Fax _____

Check if change of address _____

Membership Category:

Individual (\$50) ____ Household (\$75) ____ Student (\$20) ____

Membership Cost* _____

Additional Contribution to League* _____

Contribution to Florence Ryan Education Fund (tax deductible) _____

Total Enclosed _____

For our records: I first joined the LWV in (year) ____ in (location) _____

Mail to: Treasurer, LWV/A-B, P.O. Box 8292, Asheville, NC 28814

Assistance toward membership dues is available. To apply, contact membership chair Jean Parks at 687-0109. For new members: If you do not want your name, address and contact information to be published in the next issue of our monthly newsletter, "The Voter," check here ____.

*Membership dues and contributions to the League of Women Voters are not tax deductible, but gifts to our Education Fund are deductible.



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PO Box 8292 Asheville, NC 28814 828-258-8223 www.abc.nc.lwvnet.org/

LEAGUE CALENDAR 2008

SEPTEMBER

Forum Committee Meeting Shirley Birdie's, 3:30 p.m. Sept 15 Board Meeting YWCA, 185 S. French Broad Ave. 6:00 p.m. Sept 23

OCTOBER

Candidates Forum - Buncombe County Commission and Commission Chair Randolph Learning Center, 90 Montford Ave. 7-9 p.m. Oct 20 Candidates Forum - NC State Senate and House Randolph Learning Center, 90 Montford Ave. 7-9 p.m. Oct 27 Board Meeting YWCA, 6:00 p.m. Oct 28

NOVEMBER

New Member Tea Nov 9 Board Meeting YWCA, 6:00 p.m. Nov 18

JANUARY

Elected Officials Reception Location TBA

The League of Women Voters of Asheville-Buncombe County P.O. Box 8292 Asheville, NC 28814 828-258-8223 www.abc.nc.lwvnet.org/

League Interests

SEPTEMBER

Nuclear Weapons & the Human Future Congregation Beth ha Tephila, Liberty & Broad Streets, 6:00 p.m. Sept 10 Women's Agenda Event YWCA, 1-4 p.m. Sept 20 Fiesta Latina Agricultural Center Oct 11, 12

