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Invitation to Join Us for Lunch and Discussion!! Saturday, March 14, 2009 Open to the Public!



What: “Good Mental Health is Ageless” *presented by LWVNC & LWV-A/BC*

Guest Speakers: NC **Senator Martin Nesbitt**, Vice Chair of Senate Appropriations Committee on Health & Human Services, **Lanier Cansler**, NC Secretary of Health & Human Services, **Jim Pitts**, President, NAMI-NC & Buncombe County **Sheriff Van Duncan**

When: Saturday, **March 14**, 2009, 12:00-2:00, lunch & panel discussion.
Lunch is \$12- RSVP by **March 9**, call NCLWV, ph 919-783-5995.
Registration is 11:45, lunch is payable at the door, for additional details, call 828-251-6169.

Where: Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community
(Blue Ridge Room) 1617 Hendersonville Rd, Asheville, NC
Ph. 828-274-1531

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

A CALL TO MEMBERS TO TAKE CONSENSUS
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2009, 7 TO 8:30 P.M.
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM, YWCA

reason for the meeting? Delegates at the last national convention directed LWVUS to conduct a study of the new National Popular Vote Compact proposal to determine whether or not it would be feasible for National to support it. National has assembled a set of consensus questions, the responses to which will determine its course.

The purpose of the evening is not to debate the abolishment of the Electoral College; for years the League has had a position in favor of just such a step. The NPVCompact, however, offers a method to achieve the League’s goal by providing what is essentially an “end run” around the long, arduous, and “iffy” pursuit of a Constitutional amendment. The National Popular Vote Compact is among state legislatures. A legislature that signs onto the Compact agrees that in a presidential election, regardless of the outcome of the election in its state, the legislature will direct that state’s electors to vote in the Electoral College according to the results of the national popular vote. The Compact would not go into effect until enough states had signed on to guarantee 270 electoral votes (but therein lies the possible pitfall and why you should attend on March 25 to find out what it is!).

Our viewpoint presenters will be Janie Wilson, League member, lawyer, and seasoned debater, and Tom Coulson, League member whom so many of you know from Common Cause, Democracy-NC, the United Nations Assn. of NC, and NC Voters for Clean Elections.

If you have access to the Internet, you can download the consensus questions and a chart summarizing all arguments by visiting the League web site. For more information, please call 645-0626.

Submitted by Yvette Wessel





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
 Barb Panarites - State & Natl Liason
 Open - Programming
 Yvette Wessel - Civic Education (Forums)
 Karen VanEman - At Large
 *Sandra Abromitis - Press Release and Publicity
 Nancy Patterson - Web Page

Nominating Committee

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

Off Board Appointments

Betty Becker - Office Phone
 Kathleen Balogh - E-mail contacts
 Grace Curry - Hospitality/Phone
 Fran Myers - Corresponding Secretary
 Jack Saye - Newsclippings
 Barbara Segraves - Programming
 Jane Wilson - Forums
 Sally Boerschig - Voter Issues

New League Members

Anita Fletcher
 645-1654

maggie@charter.net

Betty Friedrichsen
 505-2650

bfriedrichsen2650@bellsouth.net

Updated printed directories will be mailed out to members soon.



Membership Planning Meeting YWCA Conference Room February 19, 2009

The following local emphasis recommendations were compiled at the Membership Planning Meeting for the board's consideration for the upcoming League program year of 2009-2010.

Citizenship In Action

- Monitor and report on governmental bodies through Observer Corps
- Provide reliable nonpartisan information through public forums, Voter Guides, and *Facts for Voters*
- Advocate for campaign finance reform
- Provide educational focus on I-26 Connector planning

Social Policy

- Provide leadership on local effects of the current economic downturn.

Environmental Issues

- Work in collaboration with local and regional groups on environmental issues, including but not limited to:
 - 1 planning and zoning
 - 2 steep slope development
 - 3 water supply and quality
 - 4 alternative energy solutions
 - 5 regional effects of fossil fuel
 - 6 climate change

In addition to these program items, LWV-ABC adheres to and may take action under consensus positions on record through its local, state, and national organizations. We will continue to partner with other organizations in pursuing our agenda locally, regionally, and statewide. We will specifically be exploring common goals with other local civic organizations and common regional agendas with our sister League in Henderson County and Member-at-Large associates in Madison County.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Members who have subscribed to the Legislative Updates will receive the first Update of the 2009-10 Session. If any member is interested in this service, you are welcome to sign up by contacting Patty Dale at daleph55@gmail.com. Also, if you have changed email addresses please notify Patty to have your new email added.

LWV-A/BC Board meeting – Feb. 24, 2009**6:00 pm at YWCA – Minutes**

Submitted by Linda Brown - Chaired by Sandra Abromitis

Board members present: Sandra Abromitis, Public Relations; Nina Accardo, Voter Services; Linda Brown, Recording Secretary; Ruth Christie, Treasurer; Jean Parks, Membership; Nancy Patterson, Webmaster; Karen VanEman, Member at large; Yvette Wessel, Civic Education. Out of town - Anne Higgins, Editor of *The Voter*; Barb Panarites, Liaison with state and national; Chair, Nominating Committee - Grace Curry **Minutes of the Jan. 27th Board meeting:** Approved (Ruth, Karen)

Treasurer's report: Ruth Christie ; The League has \$4,899 in checking, \$1,242 in a MM account, and \$5,338 in a CD, a total of \$11,479. The Florence Ryan Fund has \$1,627 in checking and a CD worth \$10,676, a total of \$12,303. Ruth and Jean will go to the Bank of Asheville to renew the CDs as directed at the January Board meeting. Approved (Jean, Karen)

The League's annual fundraising letter cost \$222 and has so far netted \$75. The FREF theater tickets cost \$544 and have so far netted \$284. (This does not include a dozen checks awaiting processing by the Assistant Treasurer.)

Old Business: Our website – Nancy Patterson www.ablww.org; The email list - Kathleen Balogh will create a file of the email list, both LWV members and friends. Nancy will put the list on our website. *From now on, Sandra will send out the emails.* If Sandra is unavailable, Nancy will serve as back-up. *As new members join the League, Jean will send their email addresses to Nancy.* The Voter - Nancy will put the newsletter onto the website. *From now on, Sandra will send a link to members.*

The National Popular Vote Compact - Nancy will put the NPV Compact on our website.

Committee Reports: Membership – Jean Parks; We have two new members, Betty Friedrichsen and Anita Fletcher. We have an Excel spreadsheet that is up to date. We have a new Directory, pages for your Blue Book. The Treasurer will provide Andy Reed a \$100 honorarium of appreciation for his printing of the fundraising letter, labels, Directory, *The Voter*, and election bookmarks.

Forum on the National Popular Vote Compact – Yvette Wessel; At convention, the National League voted to study the issue, hold consensus meetings, and then decide whether National should pursue the issue. The NPV Compact would mean: A state would commit all of its electors to whoever has won the popular vote. The members of the Forum Committee are Yvette Wessel, Karen VanEman, Jane Wilson, and Anne Higgins. On Wednesday, March 25 at 7 pm in the multipurpose room of the YWCA, the League will present a forum on the NPV Compact. The moderator will be Kathleen Balogh. The agenda will be as follows: Debate: Tom Coulson, pro; Jane Wilson, con. (15 minutes) 2. Questions from the audience. 3. Consensus questions: The recorder is Karen VanEman. Set-up will be at 6:45 pm, so please come early to help. This event is for League members only and is not open to the public. Karen will forward the results to Sandra, who will fill out the consensus form online by May 1st. Sandra will send a separate e-mail notice to members about the forum. In preparation for the forum, members should visit our website –

www.ablww.org – and read the following: 1. An explanation of the NPV Compact* 2. A chart of the pros and cons. 3. The 7 consensus questions. In advance of the forum, Yvette will write an article for *The Voter*, plus the explanation of the NPV Compact for the website. Voter Services – Nina Accardo; Nina will place voter registration materials at the ABCCM Veterans' Place located at Exit 55 off of I-40. Nominating Committee – Grace Curry; The Nominating Committee – Sandra Abromitis, Linda Brown, Grace Curry, Marsha Stickford, and Pat Wille - needs to swing into action and come-up with a slate of LWV officers and board members for 2009-2010. According to the by-laws, the slate is to be reported to the membership one month before the Annual Meeting – that is, by April 16th. The positions to be filled are: President, Vice President, Membership Chair, Editor of *The Voter*, and Head of Voter Services. The LWV regional meeting on March 14th will discuss the issue of leadership.

New Business: Regional Meeting – Sandra Abromitis; On Saturday, March 14th at 10 am in the Blue Ridge Dining Room of Deerfield, the League will hold its regional meeting. During the morning session (10 am – 12 noon), the state will conduct a presentation on leadership entitled, “Don't beat a dead horse.” During the luncheon, there will be a presentation on “Good Mental Health is Ageless” by State Senator Martin Nesbitt, Sheriff Van Duncan, State Secretary of Health & Human Services Lanier Cansler and Jim Pitts, the state president of NAMI. The luncheon is open to the public, so we are hoping for a fine turnout. Lunch is \$12. Please RSVP by **March 9**. To make a reservation, you must call the state League office in Raleigh: 919-783-5995. Registration is 11:45 and lunch is payable at the door. For additional details, please call 828-251-6169. Program for 2009-2010 – Sandra Abromitis; The Board approved the proposed program. (Ruth, Linda) Annual Meeting – Grace Curry; On Saturday, May 16th at 12 noon the League will hold its annual meeting. Grace will locate a place (Laurie's, Grovewood Café) that provides a lovely lunch for \$15. If you have a location in mind, please contact Grace. Monthly Coffee – Linda Brown; On Tuesday, Feb. 10th seven members - Jean Parks, Linda Brown, Anne Higgins, Christine Singleton, Sylvia Landis, Sandra Houts, and Pinky Zalkin - met for coffee at the Atlanta Bread Company. When asked what local issue they were most concerned about, they focused on the I-26 connector. In short, the League could sponsor a tour (by van) of the three routes and the neighborhoods affected. Karen VanEman, who has been following the issue, mentioned that two groups, UNCA and the Burton Street church, are holding forums on the I-26 connector. And both have vans. New member Sylvia Landis is pursuing the LWV van tour. If funds are required – that are not in the current budget - we can send a request to Janet Bowman, Chair of the Finance Committee. Donation Letter – Nina Accardo; Thank you, Nina, for all the hard work! **NEXT BOARD MEETING:** Tuesday, March 24th at 6 pm. Sandra Abromitis and Anne Higgins will co-chair. Adjourned at 7:45 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. New members joining after 2/01/09 may pay 1/2 year dues through 6/30/09.

Membership

Half price now through 6/30

Individual:	\$50 (\$25)
Household:	\$75 (\$37.50)
Student:	\$20 (\$10)

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.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Making Democracy Work.

Buncombe County Planning Board

Special Meeting
January 22, 2009

All nine members of the Planning Board were present for this Special Meeting on steep-slope development, and proper procedures were followed. Commissioner Holly Jones was in attendance.

Planning and Development staff presented the history of Section 70.68, Hillside Development, of the Subdivision Ordinance since 2003 and discussed how density limits have decreased on steep slopes. The proposal being considered calls for a further 25-35% decrease in density and a 30% limit on disturbing existing natural surfaces to be added to Buncombe County's Land Development and Subdivision Ordinance.

Four panels, each comprised of six to seven experts, were called forward to inform Planning Board members of their expertise and experience in steep-slope development and comment on the proposal. Several issues were mentioned that deserve further consideration. These issues included required road width changes for fire truck access, loss of Buncombe County water due to run-off, erosion control during construction, landslide hazards, enforcement of existing regulations, and preservation of natural areas and viewsheds. Other panel members commented that low density will make Asheville a community for wealthy people, and greater density is more appropriate in urban areas where infrastructure already exists.

The Planning Board will review and recommend changes to the Board of Commissioners, and a public hearing and vote will follow.

Submitted by Jane Laping

Metropolitan Sewerage District

Board Meeting
February 18, 2009, 2:00 P.M.

The only absentee was Stephen Metcalf. Bill Stanley has replaced David Gantt as the board's Buncombe County representative. Twelve observers were present, mostly staff. Mr. Hartye, General Manager, gave credit to the staff for the Excellence in Management award that the MSD received. At the request of Mayor Bellamy, he stated that the MSD has no interest in the Bent Creek property in negotiation with Henderson County, as it does not fit into the long-range plan. A second wastewater treatment plant will not be needed. The MSD had submitted proposal for \$24 million in ready-to-go projects, for submission to the State under the so-called stimulus package. The Right of Way and Finance Committees

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

reported on recent meetings. The self-insured health plan had higher than projected expenses due to two claims. However, the Disease Management program tends to keep costs down. 43% of claims were for participants over age 50. The Consolidated Motion Agenda passed without controversy. It was pointed out that "Nasty Branch" used to be called "Crystal Creek." A Board retreat is to be held in May, the time and format to be determined, at the request of Max Haner.

A board member mentioned to me that the presence of a League of Women Voters observer makes a difference and is appreciated.

Submitted by Leah Karpen

Board of the Month Highlight
Planning and Zoning Commission of Asheville



This commission was established by NCGS 160A-361 as an advisory board to the Asheville City Council. There are seven members. Two are appointed by the County Commissioners to represent the extraterritorial jurisdiction. Five members are appointed by the Asheville City Council. The term is three years. The commission:

- (1) reviews and makes recommendations on zoning, major developments, and the comprehensive development plan, and
- (2) establishes policy and guidelines for the growth and development of the City.

Planning and Zoning Meetings will be held in the First Floor North Conference Room of City Hall, 70 Court Plaza on the first Wednesday of the month.

Nuclear Issues Meeting at UNCA

Co-Sponsored by LWV-ABC

The World Affairs Council is hosting a meeting on Nuclear Issues on Monday, April 6, at 7:30 pm at Owen Center of UNCA (third floor). Refreshments are available at 7:00 pm The program will consist of two short videos, each to be followed by discussion. First, "Building a World Beyond War" presents a rational case for changing our way of thinking about war. It will be followed by "Nuclear Weapons and the Human Future," an excellent film with a powerful message about nuclear weapons. Leah Karpen will moderate the discussions. Co-sponsors are the WNC chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility and the Asheville-Buncombe League of Women Voters.



Marian Fisher, life member of the League of Women Voters, passed away Feb.8, 2009 in Concord, California. She was 87 years old. One of her passions was to take classes at College for Seniors where she interacted with other League members. She was a lifetime volunteer in hospitals, hospice, child advocacy, and League of Women Voters. Her love and kind attention to her family and friends will be missed.



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LEAGUE CALENDAR 2009

MARCH

Theater party and Fundraiser- NC Stage Co. - Tom Stoppard's Shakespearean comedy *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* March 4

Budget Committee Meeting - Ruth Christie's house. 11 Stuart Circle. 232-2883 March 4

LWVNC State Meeting in Asheville (See pg 1). March 13, 14

Board Meeting
YWCA, 6:00 pm; Executive Committee meeting 5:30. March 24

National Popular Vote Compact
YWCA Multi-Purpose Room, 7:00 - 8:30 pm (See pg 1). March 25

APRIL

Nuclear Issues Forum - sponsored by World Affairs Council, in cooperation with Physicians for Social Responsibility. Co-sponsored by LWV/ABC. Owen Conference Center (third floor) at 7:30 pm. April 6

MAY

Annual Meeting - Details to come May 16

Events of Interest

World Affairs Council - Great Decisions Series - UNCA. Owen Conference Center at 7:30. See website www.main.nc.us/wac/gd.html for more info Feb 2 - March 16

About the League of Women Voters

MISSION OF THE LEAGUE
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.



The League of Women Voters
of Asheville-Buncombe County
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