

**IN THIS MONTH'S  
 LWV-ABC VOTER**

**NOVEMBER 2009**

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**Why Do People Volunteer?**

People volunteer for a number of different reasons, ranging from a desire to learn new skills, have fun, or make a difference. Some are completely devoted to the cause, while others simply will to do their bit where they can.

Many of our volunteers have worked several years making a difference in the League while making a difference in their community. Volunteering can provide several meaningful life experiences, to name a few,

- Giving Something Back
- Create Unique Opportunities
- Add to Your Personal Growth
- Get a Sense of Accomplishment
- Receive Recognition and Feedback
- Create Friendships and a Sense of Belonging

Our local League has many volunteer opportunities; if you want to do a small job or a large job, think of the positives that it can bring to your life.

On a different note.....don't forget about the **Wine & Cheese-Nov. 12, 4:30-6:30, Blackbird Frame & Art**, and remember to RSVP lindabrown7@bellsouth.net or call her at 236-3720. This will be a lot of fun, please come!!! I look forward to seeing you there.  
 Sandra



**Workshop for Women Interested in Local Government Committees**

On Sat., Nov. 14, at the AB-Tech – Enka Campus, the NC Center for Women in Public Service will conduct a workshop to prepare and to encourage women to enter the government pipeline. Appointed positions to boards and committees can play an important role in effective government, at the local, county, and state levels. This interactive workshop helps women identify their strengths and identify what might be an interesting avenue of public service.

The workshop will be held in the Haynes Conference Ctr, 1465 Sand Hill Rd., from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$20/person, including lunch and all materials.

To register, call 919-508-2308 or go to [www.nccwps.org](http://www.nccwps.org).



## Officers and Board 2008-2009

President / Vice President - By Executive Committee consisting of members with (\*)

\*Sandra Abromitis - President

\*Barbara Panarites - Vice President

\*Ruth Christie - Treasurer

\*Anne Higgins - Recording Secretary

\*Linda Brown - Membership

Karen VanEman - At Large

Yvette Wessel -Civic Education (Forums)

Janie Wilson

### Nominating Committee

Grace Curry - Chairman

Marsha Stickford - Member

\*Sandra Abromitis - Member

Linda Brown - Member

### Off Board Appointments

Christine Singleton- Office Phone

Sandra Abromitis - E-mail contacts

Grace Curry - Hospitality/Phone

Fran Myers - Corresponding Secretary; Newspaper Articles/History

Barbara Panarites - Programming

Yvette Wessel - Forums

Open Position - Voter Editor/Web site

## LWV-ABC Board Meeting October 27, 2009 6:00 p.m. at 33 Page St.

**Board members present:** Karen Van Eman, Yvette Wessel, Ruth Christie, Treasurer, Anne Higgins, Recording Secretary, Linda Brown, Membership. **Unable to attend:** Sandra Abromitis, President; Barb Panarites, Vice President; and Janie Wilson.

**New Business:** 1. Ruth Christie chaired the meeting. Two board positions are left vacant. Anne Higgins will contact Nominating chair Grace Curry about possible members to fill these positions. 2. Minutes of the September Board meeting were sent out by Anne Higgins. The minutes were approved. (Linda, Karen). 3. The minutes of the annual meeting on May 16, 2009 will be e-mailed by Linda Brown and approved by members by responding to that e-mail. 4. Treasurer's Report: Ruth Christie sent out Treasurers quarterly reports (Profit and Loss statements and Balance Sheets) for League and Florence Ryan funds to board members via e-mail. Ruth sent out a reimbursement procedure via e-mail for board members review. The procedure was approved. (Yvette, Anne) Karen Van Eman agreed to be an editor, sending articles written by other members, invitations, events, posts, etc to the webmaster, Nancy Patterson. Anne will send approved minutes. This will help members keep up to date with the League, as the Voter is no longer in print. Members involved with committees will send any invitations, articles, or news to Karen. Also, if non-League events are of interest and are non-partisan, these may be included.

### Committee Reports:

**Membership – Bids on stationery.** Janie has received bids to purchase League stationery and envelopes. We will vote by e-mail based on her bids. **Membership booklet –** Linda questioned the need for a printed copy of membership pages, as most people could easily have this information online. This will be discussed at the November meeting. **Survey status –** The new League survey will be available at the wine and cheese party.

### New Business:

**Wine Tasting –** Linda Brown has secured the venue for the November 12th New Member Wine and Cheese party. The event will be held at Blackbird Frame and Gallery, 365 Merrimon Ave. from 4:30 – 6:30. Board members will supply the wine, as well as needed glasses, seating, tablecloths, etc. Snacks will be served. Linda will contact those members who volunteered for hospitality to help with the event. Everyone is encouraged to bring a friend. Linda will introduce new members. The gallery owners will discuss the art. **New Coalition Sponsorship –** Karen suggested

that the LWV/ABC support the non-partisan NC Coalition for a Moratorium, which is committed to reforming the death penalty in our state. The NC LWV is a member of the State Coalition for a Moratorium on the D.P., headquartered in Raleigh, of which the WNC Coalition is a part. Karen moved that LWV-A/BC join the WNC Coalition for a Moratorium; the motion was seconded & passed. **Women on Board workshop –** On Saturday, November 14, 2009 from 8:30 am - 3:30 there will be a workshop at the Enka AB Tech campus that highlights skills necessary to pursue public service opportunities and office. Ruth suggested that we have a table at the one day workshop to encourage new membership. No action was taken. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15. The next board meeting will be Nov 24, 2009, 6:00 pm, 33 Page St.



## **Asheville-Buncombe LWV Board Joins the Western North Carolina Coalition for a Moratorium**

The main reasons the Board voted to join the Coalition are as follows:

1. At the National LWV Convention in 2006, delegates adopted the following position statement: "The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty," a position made in concurrence with the position adopted by the LWV of IL.
2. The NC LWV "supports a death penalty moratorium, the fair and equal treatment of all persons in the criminal justice system, a swift, sure and fair disposition for every defendant."
3. The NC LWV is a member of the State Coalition for a Moratorium, and has a website dedicated to this issue, so if you want more information or would be interested in working on the issue, contact [lwvncdeathpen@bellsouth.net](mailto:lwvncdeathpen@bellsouth.net).
4. In 2008 alone, 3 men were freed from Death Row due to wrongful convictions.
5. More than 1 in 6 NC death row inmates had trial attorneys who were either disbarred or disciplined by the state bar. By contrast, less than 1 in 100 NC lawyers is ever disciplined. The American Bar Assoc. is only one of many professional organizations that supports a moratorium on the death penalty in the U.S.
6. Racial discrimination plays an important role in NC's the sentencing of the death penalty. Of the 163 people on NC's death row, as of Sept., 88 are African-American, 13 are other minorities, and 62 are white. (Four are women.) More than 75% of those executed in NC have been African American.
7. Many of NC's African Americans on death row were convicted by all white juries. Research shows that those convicted of killing a white are 3.5 times as likely to be given the death sentence. A recent study done in Durham County showed that in fact they were 6 times more likely to be given the death sentence.
8. Research does not support the argument that the death penalty serves as a deterrent. In fact, states that execute people have higher murder rates. Countries with the death penalty are among the world's most violent places.
9. More than 130 death row inmates have now been exonerated in the U.S. Nine of those have been in NC. Last year alone 3 were released from NC's Death Row after courts ruled that they were wrongfully convicted. All are African Americans. Research suggests that innocent people have been executed in NC and elsewhere in the U.S. Most recently, evidence indicates that Texas executed an innocent man in 2004, Cameron Todd Willingham.
10. It costs \$2.16 million dollars more to prosecute a capital case than a murder trial where a life sentence is sought by the prosecutor. Seventy percent of those costs are incurred at trial. Legislators in some states are advocating repeal of the death penalty simply on economic grounds.
11. The recent case of Glen Edward Chapman who was released in 2008 from death row, after losing 14 years of his life to prison, is an example of how the justice system does not work for African Americans who cannot afford a private attorney. His conviction was thrown out by an appeals judge because 2 detectives had lied on the stand, the D.A. did not share important evidence with his public defender which would have called into question why he was even charged, his public defender did no investigation, and the appeals judge deemed his defense lawyer to have done an inadequate job.



## 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

## Education-Budget Cuts/Stimulus Package Forum

The Asheville- Buncombe LWV presented an Educational Forum on September 17, 2009 from 6:30 P. M. to 8:00 P. M. The Randolph Learning Center was the location for the forum. The co-sponsors were Children First, United Way, YWCA, and Mountain Xpress.

Sandra Abromitis, President, LWV-A/BC gave a warm welcome to our audience and guests and then introduced the moderator and the panelists.

Panelists for the program were: Dr. Tony Baldwin, Buncombe County School Superintendent, Mr. Allen Johnson, Asheville School Superintendent, Senator Martin Nesbitt, Ms. Anna Austin, Pres. Buncombe County Assoc. of Educators, Mr. Jeremiah LeRoy, Buncombe County Grant Writer for Stimulus Project, Ms. Brenda G. Mills, ARRA Project Manager (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act).

The program started with an approximate 5-minute presentation by the panelists on their related programs and or expertise that related to budget cuts and the stimulus package. The second part of the program was formulated questions by the league and then written questions submitted by the public in attendance. Biographical information on the panelists was distributed to attendees.

Ruth Christie was our moderator for the evening and she led the forum with grace and professionalism. Outstanding questions were asked with the opportunity for more than one panelist to respond. It was an interesting and informative program. Our six panelists offered to the community opportunities, for a greater understanding of the way education policies and decisions were made. The panelists also gave us insight into how the stimulus monies were being used. Panelists brought hand-outs for the public to enhance their understanding of the subject. We also had two political representatives that asked to speak, which gave the audience more information on the topic.

The forum went smoothly due to our team members' participation and interest. Our team consists of the following league members: Barbara Panarites, Nina Accardo, and Judith Hoy, Sandra Houts, Leah Karpen, Jeff Standen, Linda Brown, Jack Saye, Janie Wilson, Hal Hogstrom, Karen Van Eman, Fran Myers, and Ann Higgins. A special thank you to our team members who made it possible for our community to be more informed on this important issue.

Barbara Panarites, Program Chair

## MEMBERSHIP FORM for 2009-2010

**League of Women Voters Asheville/Buncombe County**

P.O. Box 8292, Asheville, NC 28814

828-258-8223

www.ablww.org

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) \_\_\_\_

New members may take 50% off the above rates for February-June 2009 membership.

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-BC, P.O. Box 8292, Asheville, NC 28814

Assistance toward membership dues is available. To apply, contact membership chair

Linda Brown: membership@ablww.org.

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.

**THE VOTER**



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## LEAGUE CALENDAR 2009

# November

**12th - New Member Wine and Cheese Party**, Blackbird Frame and Gallery, 365 Merrimon Ave. from 4:30 – 6:30.

**14th - Women on Board workshop** – On Saturday, November 14, 2009 from 8:30 am - 3:30 there will be a workshop at the Enka AB Tech campus.

**24th - Board Meeting** - Nov 24, 2009, 6:00 pm, 33 Page St

