

Officers and Board - 2006-2007

President - Kathleen Balogh
Vice President - Karen Sanders
Treasurer - Jack Saye
Recording Secretary - Linda Carol
Membership - Sandra Abromitis
Barb Panarites- Board
Hal Hogstrom- Board
Anne Higgins-Board
Ruth Christie-Board
B. J. Snow -Board
Sheila Franklin - Board

Nominating Committee

Chairman - Jean Parks
Member - Marsha Stickford

Off Board Appointments

Betty Becker - Office Phone
Judy Bissel and Nelda Holder - Web Page
Sheila Franklin - Kids Voting
Grace Curry - Hospitality/Phone
Fran Myers - Corresponding Secretary
Jack Saye - Newsclippings

About the League of Women Voters

MISSION OF THE LEAGUE

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League seeks to expand citizen participation in the election process and in federal, state, and local government decision-making. Based on member participation and agreement, the League also seeks to secure public policies that promote League positions.

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.

The League of Women Voters
of Asheville-Buncombe County
221 Miles Building, 2 Wall St.
Asheville, NC 28801
828 - 258 - 8223
www.abc.nc.lwvnet.org/

THE VOTER

PUBLISHED SEVEN TIMES PER YEAR

NOVEMBER 2006

Notes from the President's Desk

Well, here we are at election time again! I hope you took some time to attend at least one of the four candidate forums the LWV/ABC offered this year. Congrats to all who assisted with the logistics. You did a wonderful job!

We need volunteers! Have you heard this from me before? We have not heard from you yet! We have toyed around with the best way to get to you and seeing as how we can't call everyone, I am going to ask again! Many of these jobs can be done from home. If we develop a pool of volunteers from which to draw, we can spread the work during the year.

For starters, these are our current needs;

- Address Labeling volunteers:** Put address labels on the Voter when it is ready to be mailed out once a month. Approx. one hour once a month
- Voter Registration volunteers:** Need a pool of folks available at different times during the year to register voters. Approx. time a few hours at a time, varies during the year.
- Web page design volunteer:** Someone that has the knowledge of website design to assist with getting our website really interactive and current, especially around elections. Not sure of the time frame until we really start to look at our site and what we

want.

- Candidate information gatherers:** Several volunteers that assist the LWV board in gathering candidate information that we will include on our website. Begins with the primary, mailing, phone calls, follow-up activity - time will vary.
- Volunteers to organize an Elected Officials breakfast** before the Long Session begins in January. This breakfast will give us the opportunity to talk about League issues with our representatives in Raleigh.

Encourage your friends to join us in our activities! Sometimes all it takes is for you to ask!

See you at the New Members Tea on Nov. 19th!

Kathleen Balogh



November 2006

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Membership

Membership year is
 July 1 to June 30.

- 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 Sandra Abromitis (686-8281) for an application.

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

Successful Fall Forum Review

LWV-A/BC organized four candidates' forums this fall with a variety of co-sponsors, several new sites and many new faces in the audiences. A big thank you to the following volunteers for the success of these programs:

Marsha Stickford - organizing the health issues forum, printing the name tents;

Anne Higgins - media publicity, designing flyers, timekeeping;

Barb Panarites - distributing flyers, setting up, timekeeping, trouble shooting.

B.J. Snow - arranging sites and URTV taping;

Judy Bissell - typing and mailing candidates' invitations;

Nelda Holder and Sonya Friedrich - moderating;

Kathleen Balogh - introducing programs, screening questions;

Leslie Simon - screening questions;

Shirley Berdie & Sheila Franklin - greeting;

Sandra Abromitis - LWV table

Ruth Christie, Civic Education chair

Redistricting Commission

The same group which pushed for changes to lobbying laws the past two years wants legislators to next address redistricting. The Coalition for Lobbying and Government Reform enlisted two former congressmen — Republican Bill Cobey and Democrat Tim Valentine — to call for a bipartisan commission to create legislative and congressional districts.

Gerrymandered legislative and congressional districts reduce competition and provide voters with fewer choices. The group presented figures showing that 86 out of the 170 legislative seats this year will be uncontested. The number compares to just 49 a decade earlier. Just one of the 13 congressional races in North Carolina was considered competitive in 2004, with the winner taking 55 percent of the vote or less. In 1994, the number was four; in 1984, six races were deemed competitive. Twelve states use independent redistricting commissions, but previous bills filed in the North Carolina legislature to create the panels have gone nowhere.

Bob Philips of Common Cause North Carolina said he believes any number of models from other states could be considered in creating an independent panel. Philips said he hoped that the trend of less competition and a U.S. Supreme Court decision suggesting that mid-decade redistricting is now possible will convince lawmakers that they need to enact redistricting reforms.



Civics 101, Judicial System

LWV-A/BC has been approved for a \$500 grant to present a 3 session educational program on the NC judicial system. Following is an excerpt from the grant application:

What: A 3-part introductory series with panel presentations and break-out sections covering:

- a. Overview of the court system
- b. Criminal court procedures
- c. Civil court procedures

If enough interest is expressed by participants in Civics 101, we will develop a more in-depth series of classes, guided by the Civics 101 participants' questions & expressed areas of concern.

When: Monday evenings in March & April – probably Mar 5 & 19 and April 2. Time- 6:00 –7:30.

Where: County courthouse, YMI, Pack Library, Reuter Hall at UNCA (Hold at least 1 session in courtroom)

Who: Our potential audience includes all Buncombe County residents although we particularly want to engage residents from Black & Hispanic communities. We will contact leaders of African American programs and events to learn more about African American issues, questions, and participation;

we will try to attract those from the Hispanic community by having translators and materials translated into Spanish. We will have diversity on our panels; i.e. color, gender balance, etc.

The Civics 101 committee will be meeting in November to start fleshing out these plans. If you're interested in helping develop & present this program, contact Ruth Christie at 232-2883.

rachristie@charter.net.

Submitted by: Ruth Christie

Forums on public access TV

The volunteer, LeeAnn Smith, who taped the judicial forum was working on editing the tape at the URTV station when her mother died. Lee Ann had to leave town before the editing of the tape was completed. Other volunteers at the station were able to prepare the program for broadcast, starting Tues., October 31. Check the URTV web-site, www.URTV.org, or the on-air schedule on channel 20 for airings.

Lee Ann had also volunteered to tape the 10/16 & 10/23 forums. Unfortunately, we weren't able to find another certified volunteer to fill in on such short notice so those forums won't be televised.

LWV-A/BC has joined URTV as a non-profit member. Hopefully, the League will be able to put their own taping/editing team together, so the next election should be easier to handle.

Submitted by: Ruth Christie



Mark Your Calendars

The LWV-AB
Invites You To

**Holiday Party
To Honor Elected
Officials**



Wednesday, December 13

5:00 to 8:00 pm

**Crowfield's
Community Center**
1745 Hendersonville Rd.
Asheville, NC

R.S.V.P.
to Sandra Abromitis:
abromitis@msn.com

hm 686-8281
cell 280-4861

Welcome to the League of
Women
Voter's Newest Member
Lois Hodgson

**Metropolitan Sewerage
District - Board Meeting
October 18, 2006**

Absent were Brownie Newman (City of Asheville) and Jon Creighton (Buncombe County).

Staff members made a presentation of the sophisticated GIS System, including everything: Software security, human ergonomics, new tools and applications. All information is integrated into the system: data management by projects, mapping data, mobile video tracking. All this was made possible by freedom to try ideas.

The former BASF waste treatment plant is no longer in operation. Enka Village residents want MSD to take over their sewers. The Board agreed, with three conditions for acceptance as proposed by MSD's attorney Billy Clark.

The Right of Way Committee presented information on Buncombe County's Greenways Master Plan for future planning.

The Minority Inclusion Report was presented with recommendations for advertising and outreach.

The Consolidated Motion Agenda passed without controversy.

MSD again received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for FY '07. The Asheville Citizen-Times had a feature article about the role that MSD plays in planning and development.

Next meeting November 15, 2:00 p.m. Open to all; try to come.

Report by Leah Karpen, Observer

**Planning and Zoning
Commission
October 4, 2006**

St. Dunstan's Community made a request to create a Historic Preservation Overlay District for the St. Dunstan's Neighborhood. There was no public comment, and the request was unanimously approved. There were two Level III site plan reviews. The first was for Zona Lofts, a 162-unit condominium and retail project to be located at 150 Coxe Avenue. The project will be of an unusual construction design, a high-rise modular building, with three levels of parking below and retail space on the street level. One member of the public spoke in support of the project and it passed unanimously. The second Level III site plan review was for the Doubletree Hotel, located at 117 Hendersonville Road, for an expansion and a height modification. The current standard height is 60' and the proposed height would be 67'. The Biltmore Forest standard height is 40'. The project was unanimously approved with the provisions that the applicant would clarify that no trees would be moved from the buffer area along Vanderbilt Road and that before the project is presented to Asheville City Council, design elements would be added to the façade to make it similar to the existing building.

Report submitted by Jean Parks



Running in High Heels (film)

Maryann Breschard's revolutionary documentary explores politics and female empowerment as it follows the story of one young woman's race for political office. (for more info go to www.52women.org)

The viewing will be followed by a panel of local female elected officials discussing their experiences and a Q&A with the audience.

When: Tuesday, November 14, 2006 7-9 P.M.

Where: Alumni Hall in the Highsmith Student Union UNC Asheville.

Sponsored by: North Carolina Council for Women/Domestic Violence Commission and UNCA Women's group

Cost: Free to public. Women and men encouraged to attend.

Emerging Issues for the State LWV:

The LWV-NC voted at the board meeting Oct. 28th to hire a part-time Legislative Liaison to oversee the process of following legislation and advocating for League policies, and to assist League members in knowing when and how to lobby effectively! I think this is a positive move and will improve the visibility of the League in Raleigh as we advocate for such issues as NC Tax Reform, support of an Independent Redistricting Committee, Campaign Finance Reform, Judicial Independence and adequate financing

of the courts, and Public Financing of Council for State races.

submitted by: Kathleen Balogh

Websites of Interest:

www.demos.org

The mission of Demos is to promote a broadly shared belief in the essential role of the public sector in pursuing public purposes, advancing the common good and creating a safe, prosperous, and fair America.

In Memory

Rosalie Davison

(1923-2006)

**League president from
1963-1965**



THE VOTER



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LEAGUE CALENDAR 2006

NOVEMBER

One Stop Voting ends Nov. 4

General Election

Kids Voting Volunteers needed Nov. 7

New Members Tea, River Ridge Club
House 2:00-4:00 Nov. 19

R.S.V.P.

to Sandra Abromitis:

abromitis@msn.com

hm 686-8281

cell 280-4861

LWV Board Meeting 5:30pm Nov. 29

DECEMBER

LWV Holiday Social to honor elected of-
ficials at Crowfield's Community Center
from 5:00 - 8:00 Dec. 13

No board meeting in December

MARCH

Civics 101 Classes TBA March 5

Civics 101 Classes TBA March 19

LWVABC Board Meetings

The board meets monthly on the
fourth Wednesday, 5:30pm at the
YWCA Board Room. All
members are welcome to attend.
The deadline for submissions to *THE
VOTER* is each month's board
meeting. **Next board meeting is
November 29.**

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Film, 'Running In High Heels 7:00-9:00 at
the UNCA Student Union
Alumni.Hall.....Nov.14

I NEED A RIDE!

*If you ever need a ride to an
event we are sponsoring
please let us know so that we
can try and arrange transpor-
tation for you! We don't want
anyone to be unable to attend
for any reason but we won't
know you can't come if you
don't call us. The LWV office
number is 258-8223.*