



# NC VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
**EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR DEMOCRACY**

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## LWVUS COUNCIL – A TROVE OF INFORMATION

**JUNE 9-11, 2007**

Judie Burke

The biennial LWVUS Council meeting is targeted to state leagues and big city and capital city leagues. A much smaller meeting than Convention, it offers lots of opportunities to interact with counterparts and national board members in both formal and informal settings, and Kathleen Balogh and I came away with many useful contacts and briefcases full of information.

One provocative presentation was a detailed history of how the League conducts studies (it has **not** always been done this way) and reaches consensus, after which Mary Wilson opened a dialogue with the floor for opinions on the use of Task Forces and ideas on how to reach consensus on new priorities in the most timely and cost effective ways. The dialogue will continue and I think we will hear more at Convention in Oregon in 2008.

Kathleen is writing about the MRI, or Membership Recruitment Initiative, and I would like to focus on the **Immigration Study**, passed by Convention in 2006.

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## MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

Kathleen Balogh

At the June State board meeting, LWVNC Board members approved applying for year two of the National Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI). Building from the success and learnings of year one (see [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) for more information on the success of year one), the second year of this National initiative will focus on a “train the trainers” model. LWVUS is currently seeking FIVE state Leagues to be the next MRI pilot participants as they enter year two of this pilot project specifically designed to reach out to potential new members.

Each state League will be trained by LWVUS and will mentor a proportion of their local Leagues (a minimum of five locals) to implement the proven communication strategies, outreach tactics, and successful program components from year one of this national initiative. Kathleen Balogh, state Board member from the LWV of Asheville/Buncombe County, and Carol Ellis, state Board member from the LWV of Lower Cape Fear, have agreed to be the two required statewide coordinators of this project.

Chosen state leagues will be informed by LWVUS in early August of their participation and we will be sharing the news with you in the next edition of the NC Voter. If you think your league could/should be one of the five local leagues chosen to work on this initiative, please visit the [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) website and review the activities required of participating locals and then notify state President Judie Burke.

**Officers and Directors****2007-2008**

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**Editor's Note: Please note that the email address for the League has changed. It is now [lwwnc@bellsouth.net](mailto:lwwnc@bellsouth.net)**

*If you, like many members, print out all or certain pages of the e-NC Voter, you can save colored ink by instructing your printer to print in black and white. Printers vary in their exact steps; go to File/Print, then follow the menu to "print color in black and white" or a similar choice.*

**LWVUS COUNCIL** *Continued from Page 1*

Already the committee has produced *Immigration 101 – a Resource List*, eight background papers, one full length article in *National Voter*, four one-page articles (excerpted from background papers) for *National Voter*, *Guidelines for the LWVUS Immigrations Study at the Local Level*, and consensus questions.

All local Leagues should have begun educating their members using the above resources available at [lww.org](http://lww.org). On September 1, 2007, a Leader's Guide, which includes consensus questions, will be sent to local leagues for taking consensus between September and January, 2008. February 1, 2008 is the deadline for LWVUS to receive consensus response forms, after which the Immigration Study Committee will formulate the position for adoption by the LWVUS Board by early April, 2008. (See Immigration Study and Timeline below.)

It's a tall order and the committee has done a magnificent job in moving this study forward in record time. Now is the opportunity for all local league members to educate ourselves and others, and engage in meaningful, informed discussion so that the League can be at the table in future negotiations on immigration reform and policy.

**LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY**

At its October meeting the LWVUS Board adopted the following scope for the LWVUS 2006-2009 Immigration Study:

- Underlying values and principles regarding immigration
- Reasons for migration from other countries, including but not limited to:
  - Effects of global interdependence on migration
  - Motivation of refugees and asylees
  - Motivation of other immigrants
- Current federal immigration policy, including but not limited to:
  - Overview
  - Effectiveness in uniting families
  - Effectiveness in meeting needs of businesses
  - Effectiveness of enforcement
  - Human rights concerns
- Impact of immigration, including but not limited to:
  - Economic effects of authorized and immigration
  - Diversity

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## CHANGES IN THE NC INCOME TAX: NOT AS EASY AS IT LOOKS

Mary Klenz and June Kimmel



*“The LWVNC and others consider this to be a progressive and a fair way to raise revenues for needed services. Graduated rates can be structured to apply higher rates to those with higher incomes, lesser rates to those with modest and low incomes and even exempt very low income groups.”*

**P**roviding an adequate and stable revenue stream to meet state needs is an issue before the Fiscal Modernization Committee. One recommendation of changes to the NC tax code is to decrease individual income tax rates and broaden the sales tax base to include some services. Some say that broadening of the base can produce enough additional revenue to allow tax policy writers to lower the sales tax rate and offset the loss of revenue from lower income tax rates. Others question that assumption.

Currently North Carolina taxes earned income at rates from 6% to 8%. If a wage earner makes \$125,000 (after deductions and exemptions) she or he would pay 6% on the first \$12,750, 7% on \$12,751-\$60,000, 7.75% on \$60,001-\$120,000 and 8% on the remaining \$5,000.

The LWVNC and others consider this to be a progressive and a fair way to raise revenues for needed services. Graduated rates can be structured to apply higher rates to those with higher incomes, lesser rates to those with modest and low incomes and even exempt very low income groups. Exemptions and deductions can be targeted to give relief to those most in need and can be structured to accommodate changes in life circumstances such as number of dependents and emergency expenditures. Changes to lower the rate paid by high income wage earners would give relief to those who earn the most but would not benefit middle and low income tax payers and make the system less progressive.

Exemptions, deductions, federal offsets and sources of income are other factors that affect the amount of taxes we pay. Income from the sale of an asset, income from investments and inheritance and income earned from work are all taxed at different rates. Earned income is taxed at a higher rate than income from sale of an asset. Interest on home mortgages is deductible. Rents are not. Interest paid on car loans is not deductible while interest paid on home equity loans is. State income taxes are deductible from federal income taxes, others are not. Who pays, how much and what is or is not taxed impact fairness in multiple ways.

These are some of the issues that committee members and tax planners need to grapple with when considering changes in the income tax code. Sales tax changes are another issue and will be examined at another time.

## ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT - JULY, 2007

Beverly Kawalec

### GOALS:

- Empower League members to be effective advocates with their elected officials
- Educate members on the legislative process and issues
- Prepare Leaguers for contact with their legislators in their home districts
- Engage members in the formation of public policy
- Encourage coalitions with other organizations which are working on related issues
- Increase visibility and the presence of the LWV at the Legislature
- Influence legislation related to LWVNC priorities.



### PROGRAM:

**Field Trips** Mary Klenz led three Field Trips to the legislature for local Leagues during April. Orange/Durham/Chatham, Henderson, Dare and Currituck Leagues have attended. They were very productive meetings. In addition, more than 20 Leaguers from around the State attended the NC Voters for Clean Elections annual 'Voter-Owned Elections' Lobby Day Tuesday, June 19th at the General Assembly in Raleigh.

**An Advocacy Committee** The Advocacy Committee Point People met on April 17 to share with each other which bills each person would be following in this legislative session and to coordinate their efforts with Paula Wolf, the lobbyist. Subsequently, the Point People have been attending legislative meetings. Our Point People are:

- Tax Reform – Mary Klenz
- Redistricting – Jan Richmond
- Death Penalty Moratorium – Sara Stealy
- Campaign and Election Reform – Louise Romanow
- Aging Issues – Joan Robertson
- Natural Resources/Environmental Quality – Jeri Gray

**A lobbyist**, Ms. Paula Wolf, League lobbyist, has been attending the committee meetings where our issues have been discussed and has been issuing a weekly email update and timely action alerts on our legislative priorities. Two hundred and ten people have signed up for the legislative updates. Read the Updates on our web site: [www.lwvnc.org](http://www.lwvnc.org).

**Local League Visits with Legislators in their Home Districts** Mary Klenz and June Kimmel met with Beverly Purdue on the Earned Income Tax Credit. June Kimmel testified at the Navy's Open Information Session against the proposed Outlying Landing Field. Brenda Rogers testified before the House Election Law and

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Campaign Finance Reform Committee on June 20 on HB 1517 which would expand NC's public financing program to some Council of State offices.

For an update on the bills that we are following, subscribe to The League's Legislative Update: The Voice by contacting Paula Wolf at wolf@deltaforce.net.

### **LOBBY DAY, JUNE 19, 2007**

Mary Klenz

The LWV had a great turnout for yesterday's Lobby Day with coalition members. Representatives from ODC, Catawba Valley, Currituck, Union, Wake, Goldsboro MAL and LWVNC Board all attended.

The day was jam packed. Following a briefing, we attended the news conference on Campaign Reform. Following that the Earned Income Tax Coalition held a news conference on the House/Senate budgets. We also attended the Senate Select Committee on Election Reform meeting concerning issues related to the Same Day Registration bill.

Members fanned out throughout the Legislature to meet with representatives and senators and leave materials on LWV and coalition priorities. Our goal was to touch base with representatives from all the districts where we have local LWV's.

Thanks to all who attended and represented the League of Women Voters in a stellar fashion.

### **STATE BOARD MEMBERS TESTIFY**



In support of campaign finance reform, Brenda Rogers, (picture, left) vice-president of the NC State Board and member of the Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties League, testified for the League of Women Voters of NC at the House Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform Committee on June 20. House Bill 1517, Voter-Owned Elections for Council of State is a pilot that provides voluntary public financing for candidates for State Auditor, Commissioner of Insurance, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In April, June Kimmel, until recently on the NC State Board and long time member of the Charlotte/Mecklenburg League testified for the League opposing the Navy's proposed Outlying Landing Field. The hearing was held by the US Navy, specifically the Naval Facilities Engineering Command. Her comments pointed out that because it was so close to a major wildlife refuge it would pose major risks to the planes and pilots. The plan to poison the fields to discourage birds from continuing to use the refuge is unacceptable. She continued, "More than 100,000 tundra swans and snow geese winter in the area..." and "...30,000 acres of valuable farmland...is of great important to agriculture in North Carolina - which has lost more farmland in the last two years than any other state." In addition she spoke to the issue of obliterating a wildlife refuge that had taken 75 years to put together.

Shortly after the hearing, Elizabeth Dole, who sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee, announced that she opposed the site, and funds for the expansion there were removed from the appropriations bill. Representative Price, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, also opposed the site, as did Senator Burr, Governor Easley, Rep. Hackney, and Senate President Pro Tem Basnight.

Editor's Note: The Navy subsequently withdrew the plan and is currently looking at sites in Virginia



**LWV – Dare County:** leadership positions in this League are often held by co-chairs or co-officers. This practice provides an opportunity for more members to serve on the Board and share the responsibility of the office or committee. Dare also co-sponsors informational meetings for the community with other organizations such as BPW, the Coastal Studies Institute of UNC, and GEM Adult Center. The Board members in the photo from left, front row are: Co-presidents Nancy Birindelli and Jeannette Anderson; back row, Secretary Marianne Landrum, Co-membership Chairs Paula Donaghy and Ellen Barbaro, and Fundraising Chair Karen DeVacchio.

## MORE LEAGUES JOIN THE E-NC VOTER CONVERSION

Beverly Hanly

With the recent addition of the Dare and Macon leagues, the number of leagues who distribute the NC Voter electronically has risen to six; many members in leagues that haven't converted yet have signed up to receive the electronic version because they like its timeliness and they like "not getting more paper". Many of the state legislators are now receiving the eNC Voter. These changes are resulting in considerable savings for the state League and we will continue to pursue the conversion.

Thank you, Macon and Dare Leagues.



Beverly Hanly (above), editor of the NC Voter

### WEB SITES OF INTEREST

For your easy reference, here are some of the web sites mentioned in this issue or of use in checking other information.

- [lww.org](http://lww.org) - LWVUS papers on national ImmigrationStudy  
- LWV Store
- [lwwnc.org](http://lwwnc.org) - News and information about the state and local Leagues, and now including a list of the Coalition Partners of LWVNC
- [ncwu.org](http://ncwu.org) - NC Women United Agenda for 2007-08
- [ncga.state.nc.us](http://ncga.state.nc.us) - to reach state legislators and to check the status of pending legislation
- [democracy-nc.org](http://democracy-nc.org) - Democracy North Carolina for information on pending issues
- [ncjusticecenter.org](http://ncjusticecenter.org) - Information on issues and through its NC Budget and Tax Center updated information on Fiscal Modernization, aka Tax Reform
- [statefiscal.org](http://statefiscal.org) - State Fiscal Analysis Initiative Tax information for all the states

**LWV - Macon County:** Maethel Shindelman, president, (picture not available) identifies Voter Services as being the primary mission of LWV-Macon County and so in the months leading up to the elections they plan a number of candidate forums. They work with Little Tennessee Water Association, the Land Trust for Little Tennessee, the Greenway and other civic groups as well as send observers to to the County Commissioners meetings, the School Board meetings and memetings of the Franklin Board of Alderman.

### THE LEAGUE AND HEALTH CARE

The League believes that quality, affordable health care should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care. Furthermore, the League believes that all Americans should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute and long-term care and mental health care.

## CONGRATULATIONS, CURRITUCK COUNTY LEAGUE

At LWVUS Council in June, Currituck was officially recognized as a League bringing the LWV's growing presence in North Carolina to 18 leagues. Congratulations to Sue Hill and Patricia Lail, co-presidents, (below) and all the members of the Currituck League.



## LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY

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### THE IMMIGRATION STUDY TIMELINE

#### September 2006 to January 2008 –

Local Leagues help educate members and communities about immigration issues

#### September 1, 2007 –

The LWVUS distributes a Leader's Guide that includes consensus questions

#### September 2007 to January 2008 –

Local Leagues take consensus

#### February 1, 2008 –

Deadline for the LWVUS to receive consensus response forms

#### February 1, 2008 to March 20, 2008 –

Using consensus responses, the LWVUS Immigration Study Committee formulates the position

#### Late March/early April 2008 –

The LWVUS Board adopts the position

*Check [lww.org](http://lww.org) to join a nationwide members discussion group about immigration.*

## HAYWOOD COUNTY – INTEREST IN THE LEAGUE

A group of interested citizens has been meeting in Haywood County with the potential goal of forming a local League there. They are planning to have candidate forums this fall and have generated a lot of enthusiasm. If you live in Haywood, or have friends who do, contact Cornelia Cree at [cs Cree@charter.net](mailto:cs Cree@charter.net) for more information.

## LWUS NEWS

### LWVUS LEADERS NOMINATION FORM

The search for talented leaders to serve on the national board of the League is a long process consisting of many steps. The first step in this process is the search for leaders from the grassroots. In this regard the LWVUS Nominating Committee is asking you to partner with us in seeking candidates for the LWVUS Board of Directors and Nominating Committee for the 2008-2010 biennium.

The Talent Search is on!

Currently casting the leading roles for a 2 year term of office:

- \* President
- \* Two Vice Presidents
- \* Secretary-Treasurer
- \* Eight Directors
- \* Four Nominating Committee members

Our Talent is our Future! Help us Search for new stars!

Give an opportunity to . . .

- \* A fellow League member - or yourself to experience personal growth.
- \* A League somewhere to have a member with national experience

To nominate a League Member (or yourself) please use one of the two methods: - the online submission for or the downloadable, mail-in form.