



NC VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

**EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING
FOR DEMOCRACY**

IN THIS ISSUE

LWVNC
Legislative Update
Page 1

Our Project Manager
Page 1

LWVUS Legislative Priorities
2009
Page 2

NC League
CoalitionPartners
Page 2

N. C. State Convention
June 5-7
Page 3

Program Planning
for 2009-2010
Page 3

State Convention
Registration Form
Page 4

Regional Meeting
in Asheville
Page 4

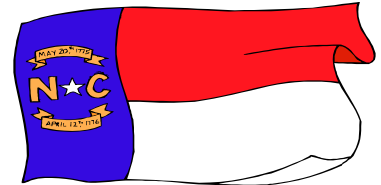
State Board
Nominated State
2009-2011
Page 5

Sunshine Day
LWVEF Sponsored Event -
N.C. Open Government
Coalition Event -
Page 6

National Popular Vote
Compact
Page 7

Suspension of the
National Voter
Page 7

LWVNC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



The 2009-2010 session of the North Carolina General Assembly convened on Wednesday, January 28, 2009. Given that the Constitution of the State of North Carolina provides that the General Assembly will convene every other year, the odd year sessions are considered to be the "Regular Sessions." In a Regular Session of the Assembly, a majority of all members must be present in the Senate and the House. Each body meets in its respective chambers on Monday evenings and during the day on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The members return to their homes and are available to their constituents during the weekend. Also during the week, committee meetings are held. There will be a dozen or more committees for each body and every legislator will serve on several committees. These committees are extremely important as every bill that is introduced will be studied by at least one committee in the House and in the Senate. This Regular Session is set to be very active and interesting for all parties involved.

The League of Women Voters of North Carolina will focus in four areas during this Regular Session of the Assembly. They are:

1. Campaign and Election Reform
2. Access to Government
3. Environment
4. Tax & Budget Fairness

The League will be sending legislative updates and calls to action during the 2009-2010 Session. This is the first update of the session. The Legislative Update is compiled by Erin Connelly, Project Coordinator for the North Carolina League of Women Voters. If you wish to unsubscribe, please email Patty Dale at daleph55@gmail.com.

LWVNC HIRES A PROJECT MANAGER

Bev Kawalec

I am happy to announce that the LWVNC has hired Ms. Erin Connelly to be our Project Coordinator. Erin started work in late January and has jumped right into the position.

Erin is a native North Carolinian who now lives in Knightdale. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree (2004) from Emory and Henry College in Emory, Virginia with a major in Political Science/Public Policy and Community Service. She lived and worked in Washington, DC, from 2005 to 2008. She returned to North Carolina for a more balanced and less stressful life. She is excited about working for the League and is already working enthusiastically.

Erin will work part time, up to 20 hours per week. As Project Coordinator her main

Continued on Page 2

Officers and Directors

2007-2008

President	Judie Burke	ODC
Vice President	Brenda Rogers	ODC
Secretary	Nancy Birindelli	Dare
Treasurer	Betty Ellerbee	Wake

Directors

Audrey Albrecht	Lower Cape Fear
Kathleen Balogh	Asheville/Buncombe
Kadra Bradford	Pitt
Carole Ellis	Lower Cape Fear
Beverly Hanly	ODC
Beverly Kawalec	ODC
Lousie Romanow	Wake
Fran Syptak	Catawba Valley

Nominating Committee

Lee Luebbe - Chair	Henderson
Vicki Gehrig	Wake
Nancy Birindelli	Dare
Kadra Bradford	Pitt
Ellen Olson	Piedmont Triad

LWVNC

Office: 3509 Haworth Drive
Suite 404
Raleigh, NC 27609-7214
Phone: 919.783.5995
E-mail: lwwnc@bellsouth.net
E-mail the NC Voter Editor:
lwwncvotereditor@bellsouth.net
Google Page:
<http://groups.google.com/group/lwwnc>.

PROJECT MANAGER

Continued from page 1

duties will be reporting to the League membership about the League issues in the General Assembly; coordinating the activities of the State Convention; and developing and implementing a fund raising database. Erin will work from home with occasional trips to the shared office. She will report to Judie Burke. Please welcome Erin and help her get to know what a great organization the League is.

A SESSION LIKE NO OTHER

House Speaker Joe Hackney said on Friday that the legislative session that begins this week will challenge lawmakers like never before. "In my 28 years here, we've never had one like it", said Hackney ... We'll do the best we can'."

FROM THE RALEIGH N&O 1/26/09

LWVUS 2009 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The LWVUS Board announces Global Climate Change and Health Care to be the top legislative priorities for the upcoming year. Top priority issues are ones on which major congressional action is expected and on which the LWVUS will seek to be an active player. Tier two priorities are Election Reform and DC Voting Rights. Tier two issues will be acted upon if significant success is possible, though top priorities will take precedence. Tier three issues could be subject for LWVUS action only if good opportunities present themselves, and there is no pressing action on top priority and tier two issues. Tier three issues we are watching are: Campaign Finance Reform; CEDAW (the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women); Civil Liberties; Ethics; and Redistricting. The LWVUS prioritizes legislative issues for advocacy in order to focus limited resources on those issues where it is considered the League can have a meaningful impact and there is member interest and opportunity for progress.

LEAGUE COALITION PARTNERS

Bev Kawalec

What is the issue that you care about most? It is likely that the League works in coalition with an organization that represents your issue. Below are some of the organizations which are League partners. All of these organizations are listed on the League web site (www.lwvnc.org) under "League Partners" with a link to their web site. Most of these organizations provide an e-mail newsletter or action alerts or legislative updates. Take a moment to go to the web site of the organization that interests you and sign up for their e-publication. Combine your League interest with a partner's and make your actions even more effective. And don't forget to post your interests and activities on our blog, <http://groups.google.com/group/lwvnc>.

- NC Voters for Clean Elections
- Common Cause
- Democracy NC
- NC Center for Voter Education
- NC Coalition for Lobby Reform
- Open Government Coalition
- North Carolina Justice Center (operates the NC Budget and Tax Center)
- NC Justice Center (operates the North Carolina Health Access Coalition)
- NC Justice Center (operates Together NC—for tax reform)
- Health Care for All North Carolinians
- NC Conservation Network
- NC Women United

STATE CONVENTION AT GREENSBORO

JUNE 5-7, 2009

Brenda Rogers

Hold the dates of June 5-7, 2009 for the LWVNC Convention! Local Leagues should plan to send voting delegates to the convention to adopt program priorities for the next two years, elect LWVNC officers and board members, and approve any changes to the by-laws. All League members are encouraged to attend workshops on Friday afternoon and informative sessions planned for Saturday and Sunday on a variety of League issues.

The convention will be held in Greensboro with support from the Piedmont Triad League of Women Voters. The convention hotel is the Clarion Greensboro Airport Hotel (415 Swing Road, www.clariongreensboro.com, tel. 336-299-7650). To receive the discounted rate of \$69 per room (plus 13% tax), make reservations by May 21, 2009 and be sure to tell the hotel that you are attending the LWVNC convention. The registration fee of \$80, to be paid to LWVNC, will cover lunch and dinner on Saturday, June 6, and breakfast on Sunday, June 7. A special one-day registration rate for Saturday, including lunch only, will be \$20, and tickets to the banquet Saturday evening, with Representative Alma Adams speaking and open to the public, will be \$30.

Registration forms are available online at www.lwvnc.org and are on page 4.

JOIN PROGRAM PLANNING FOR 2009-11

Bev Kawalec

“Program is the League’s reason for being, the basis for both education and action efforts. League program consists of those governmental issues that League members choose for concerted study and action. It includes both adopted positions upon which action is taken and issues for study that will lead to a position and action.” (In League)

“The process ... is for local Leagues to make suggestions for State Program at least three months prior to Convention and then for the State Board to formulate a recommended Program”



Every two years, at State Convention, League members adopt a program for study and action. The process as specified in the By-laws is for local Leagues to make suggestions for State Program at least three months prior to Convention and then for the State Board to formulate a recommended program and submit that program to the local Boards at least two months prior to Convention.

State Convention this year will be June 5, 6 and 7 in Greensboro. Local Leagues must send their program suggestions to the State League by March 1. Then the State Board will formulate a recommended program at their March 14 Board meeting. The State League will send this recommended program to the local Leagues during the last two weeks of March. At State Convention the delegates will vote on the program for 2009-11.

Please send your League’s recommendations to Bev Kawalec, Advocacy Chair, bevkawalec@bellsouth.net by March 1, 2009.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Registration Form for State Convention

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 5-June 7, 2009

Clarion Greensboro Airport Hotel

415 Swing Road, Greensboro, NC 27409

Tel. 336-299-7650, www.clariongreensboro.com

First Name

Last Name

Name for nametag

League

Responsibility

Voting Delegate ____ Yes ____ No

Street/Mailing Address

City State ZIP

Daytime Telephone

email

REGISTRATION FEE for all Convention attendees:

Includes lunch and banquet dinner on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday _____ \$80

OPTIONAL DINE AROUND FRIDAY EVENING AT LOCAL RESTAURANTS (not included in registration)

_____ Yes, I want to go to dinner with other Leaguers

OTHER OPTIONS FOR PERSONS NOT REGISTERED FOR CONVENTION

	# attending
_____ Saturday dinner banquet only	_____ \$30 per banquet
_____ Saturday day rate, including lunch only	_____ \$20

TOTAL payable to LWV-NC _____

Registration Form with check payable to LWV-NC must be received by May 22, 2009. Mail to: League of Women Voters of NC

Attn: Treasurer
3509 Haworth Drive, Suite 404
Raleigh, NC 27609

Room rates: \$69 single or double, plus tax (currently 13%)

Reserve by calling Clarion at 336-299-7650 and state you are with the League of Women Voters.

Room reservations at this rate must be made by **May 21, 2009.**

NOMINATING COMMITTEE PROPOSES SLATE FOR 2009 -2011

Lee Luebbe

Members of the Nominating Committee announce the following slate to be considered at the June Convention:

President: *Kathleen Balogh, LWV of Asheville
Vice – President: *Carole Ellis, LWV of Lower Cape Fear
Secretary: *Nancy Birindelli, LWV of Dare County
Treasurer: Beth Springston, LWV of Charlotte/Mecklenburg

Directors Nominated for 2 – year terms are:

*Audrey Albrecht, LWV of Lower Cape Fear
*Judie Burke, LWV of Orange, Durham, Chatham (ODC)
Barbara Coulson, MAL Madison County
Diane Davis, LWV of Piedmont
Gray Newman, LWV of Charlotte, Mecklenburg
Jo Nicholas, LWV of Moore County
Carolyn Jones O'Connor, LWV of Catawaba County
*Louise Romanow, LWV of Wake County

Nominating Committee Nominees are:

*Ellen Olson, Chair, LWV of Piedmont
*Vicki Gerig, LWV of Wake
Yvette Wessel, LWV of Asheville/Buncombe

The four principles which the Nominating Committee used to focus our work included: diversity of age, geography, culture, and gender with the overriding principle that the persons are committed to the mission of LWVNC. To that extent, the committee is pleased to submit a slate that represents ten leagues, some small and some large, men as well as women, a broadening of cultural and ethnic representation, and a balance of six new members and six returning elected members. It is important to note that the existing Bylaws permit the President and the Board to appoint for one year as many directors as there are elected directors on the Board.

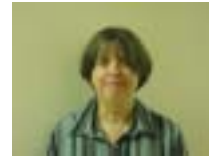
Members who served on the Nominating Committee are:
Nancy Birindelli, Kadra Bradford, Vicki Gerig, Ellen Olson, and Lee Luebbe, Chair.
* Currently serving

REGIONAL MEETING IN ASHEVILLE, MARCH 14, 2009

The LWVNC Board will offer a free workshop to explore new management structures for local League boards from 10:00 AM until noon on March 14, 2009. All are welcome but at least two board members from area Leagues should attend. Following the workshop, LWVNC is hosting a regional meeting for all League members and an open-to-the public presentation from noon to 2:00 PM on "Good Mental Health Is Ageless." Senator Martin Nesbitt will discuss the status of mental health in North Carolina followed by a panel discussion with Secretary of Health and Human Services Lanier Cansler and professionals in the field.



Kathleen Balogh, Carole Ellis



Nancy Birindelli, Beth Springston



Audrey Albrecht, Judie Burke



Barbara Coulson, Diane Davis



Gray Newman, Jo Nicholas



Carolyn Jones O'Connor, Louise Romanow

Tickets to the luncheon are \$12, payable at the event. The workshop and luncheon will be held in the Blue Ridge Room at Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community, 1617 Hendersonville Rd, Asheville, NC. Please register for the events by contacting the LWVNC office by **March 9:** Phone (919) 783-5995 or e-mail **LWVNC@bellsouth.net.**

SUNSHINE DAY

LWVEF CO-SPONSORS EVENT

On Friday, March 20 from 1 - 2:30 PM (ET), the LWVEF will co-host the 4th Annual Sunshine Week National Dialogue. The event, "Opening Doors: Finding the Keys to Open Government," will be held at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC, and available via webcast. It will feature panels of experts from inside and outside government, who will discuss federal openness policies and opportunities for people to use government information to make a difference in their communities. Leagues are encouraged to host "viewing parties" in their local communities. Audience members will have opportunities to ask questions of the panelists, and Leagues could consider combining the webcast with a follow-up panel to discuss local aspects of the issue. For more information, visit www.openthegovernment.org; to register to participate in the webcast, go to lww.org.



Sunshine Day in N.C. scheduled for March 18

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition has designated Wednesday, March 18 as Sunshine Day across the state. The day falls during what is nationally known as Sunshine Week, a week set aside to reflect on the importance of open government as a cornerstone of democracy. On March 18 a workshop sponsored by the Sunshine Center of the North Carolina Open Government Coalition will be held in Charlotte at the Levine Museum of the New South. Panels planned will showcase working systems in use to efficiently access government officials' e-mails, reporter's use of new state legislation on salary disclosures and an overview of the successes and failures of open government in recent months.

Who should attend: Citizens, journalists, government employees, librarians, lawyers, historians, public officials, anyone and everyone.

Information is from Elon College web site:
www.elon.edu

RUNNING & WINNING

Diana Haskell

The League of Women Voters of Wake County along with Saint Mary's School and with assistance from numerous community supporters, is holding our second *Running & Winning* workshop at Saint Mary's School in Raleigh on Saturday, March 28, 2009. This program brings young women of high school age and elected women officials together with the goal of encouraging the students to get involved and stay involved in public service. More details, including a page on how you can help, are available on our Web site <http://www.runwinwake.org/>.

The program is being sponsored in part through a grant from LWVNC that budgets funds each year to provide limited support for local League projects that can serve as models for other Leagues. We are well on our way to raising the additional contributions of time and money needed to make this event a success but help from other Leaguers would always be welcome.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CATAWBA VALLEY CELEBRATES "CONSTITUTION DAY"



Last year, the Catawba Valley League invited the local schools to join in observance of Constitution Day where, as part of the observance, the Preamble to the Constitution is read aloud.

But that isn't all that LWVCV does to remind citizens of the importance of our Constitution. President Fran Syptak has arranged with a local printer to print pocket sized copies of the Constitution with an imprint of the League of Women Voters. While they are intended for LWVCW's use, LWVCV is happy to share them with other Leagues for \$1 each. Leagues have used them as fund raisers, as a thank you to speakers, as prizes and awards. If your League is interested, contact Fran Syptak at Fsyptak@charter.net

LWV Catawba Valley also reports that it held its 8th annual "Coffee With Our Legislators" on Saturday, January 17th, which from all reports, was especially successful this year



The following are excerpts from recent LWV President's Letters and are included here for the benefit of members who do not receive their information electronically.

BACKGROUND FOR THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote.

Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts. Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact.

There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue? To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (available at www.lwv.org) by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

© 2008 by the League of Women Voters of the United States

SUSPENSION OF THE NATIONAL VOTER

At its meetings last week, the LWVUS Board of Directors decided to suspend publication of *The National Voter* magazine (paper and digital) until the League's finances are healthier. Publication costs for *The Voter* are prohibitive in a time of budget cutbacks. The Board and the LWVUS staff are committed to finding new ways to deliver information to our members and supporters. We will keep you informed as we move forward. We want you to know that we very much appreciate your willingness to replace the paper *Voter* with the digital edition, and we regret that we cannot continue. We do welcome your suggestions for ways we can most effectively adapt and communicate material you value in *The Voter*. Questions and comments can be sent to Board Member Nancy Eitrem at neitreim@speakeasy.net.

Editor's Note: As you may be aware, in recent years your State Board has been working toward eliminating paper copies of the LWVNC Voter with substantial savings realized. Almost all of our Leagues distribute their newsletters electronically and they have agreed to distribute the LWV NC Voter electronic version as well. (Members who don't use email continue to receive paper copies.) We hope to complete the effort this year. Meanwhile, we continue to discuss new ways of communicating with members that may be faster, more focused and more cost effective. If you have any suggestions, please contact the LWVNC Editor or send an email to lwvncvotereditor@bellsouth.net