

League of Women Voters of Wake County



December 2011

December Party

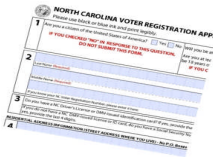
Sunday December 11th
Open House at the home of Claudia Kadis
2-5 pm
4143 Gardenlake Drive Phone: 787-0992 if directions needed

Bring your spouse or partner, a favorite treat to share, share a festive mood with league friends. Come early or late, but do come. All are welcome!!!

Friday Lunch with the League/Timely Topics

January 27th
12 Noon at the YWCA, 554 E Hargett St, Raleigh 27601
Speaker: Gary Bartlett, Executive Director of the NC Board of Elections
“Challenges for Voters in 2012”

- Bring a brown bag lunch. Snacks and drinks will be provided.
- Bring an interested friend, if possible.
- And yes, there are many challenges for 2012 voters at this time!



Hot Topic and Environmental Round Table Discussions

December 8th
11:50 at K&W Cafeteria, Cameron Village
Round Table with Glen Anderson on Climate Change

January 11th 1:30 to 3:30 p.m
League office at 3509 Haworth Drive, Suite 404, Raleigh 27609
Discussion Topic: Immigration

Cheers from the Chair

Wow! This fall was busy. Many League members participated in making these activities interesting, worthwhile and fun. Many thanks to you all.

In September and October local elections for school board, county and municipalities were the focus of a great deal of effort by League members and were overwhelmingly well attended by the public in great part as a result of our collaboration with WakeUpWake. Marian Lewian was tireless and successful in her efforts to make sure that the tenor of the forums met the high standards of League Nonpartisanship. She also demonstrated skill in keeping the discussions lively and controlled. Inviting members to participate in moderating, timing, and greeting made it possible for many of us to be involved in the forums.

The Friday Lunches "Timely Topics" have been exceptional. The Luncheon Committee Cindy Chew organized in the summer planned carefully with subcommittees helping to make each event evolve smoothly. In September Anthony Tata, Superintendent of WCPSS, provided us with background on himself, the Broad (rhymes with road) Superintendent Institute and ideas for the future of WCPSS. In October Mayor Charles Meeker and member Ann Franklin who introduced him, began with a swan song for his many years as mayor by recounting adventures and accomplishments, and concluded with hopes for the future. He's not leaving town!

In October and November the Education Committee and a few other interested members read, discussed and thought about the weighty subject of the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education. The result was a consensus that we were pleased with and the hope that the LWV will now be able to take a more affirmative role in supporting and improving public education in the US. Our consensus will be compiled with others from around the nation and become by early next year the LWVUS position. We ended the month of November with Grady McCallie of the Conservation Network who updated us on environmental changes in North Carolina.

The Leadership Team has continued to work closely with many members to build our league as we all try to balance our diverse commitments to community and family. We thank all of you who surely also strive for this balance and have been able to be involved this fall. We look forward to seeing even more of you in the coming months. "Many hands make the work light" and more fun!

Looking forward to seeing you at our holiday party on Sunday, December 11th, 2-5 at Claudia Kadis's lovely home! Always a great treat. Thank you for inviting us. Claudia.

Mary Martorella, Chair

Education Committee

Thank you to all who took part in the consensus on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education. Everyone contributed their ideas at our two consensus meetings. That made for great discussions as Eve Vitaglione moderated and Betty Ellerbee was our scribe. In January we will resume our subject of WCPSS and work our way through, The Life and Death of the Great American School System, by Diane Ravitch. **On January 4th, the first Wednesday of the month and year we will meet at the new time of 1:30-3 in the League office.**

I would be glad to order a copy of the book for anyone if you will let me know by December 15th.
\$11.00
mmmartorella@nc.rr.com

Leadership Team

Mary Martorella, Chair
Betty Ellerbee,
Communications
Marian Lewin,
Finance and Voters
Service
Vicki Gerig,
Membership
Eve Vitaglione,
Membership

LWVNC in the news on Redistricting Suit

From LWVNC President Jo Nicolas

LWVNC is a plaintiff with NAACP, Democracy NC, Coalition for Social Justice, A. Phillip Randolph Institute and individual plaintiffs throughout the state in litigation against the pre-cleared redistricting maps. Why are we suing if they have been pre-cleared by the Department of Justice? They don't comply with the State Constitution and are unfair to all voters in NC. The Voting Rights Act Section 5 is a very narrow legal standard, and there are other, more comprehensive legal standards that cover equal protection rights for all voters in NC. VRA Section 5 covers only specific counties, and our lawsuit includes districts that are in non-Section 5 counties.

Additionally, LWVUS submitted an amicus brief to the Supreme Court related to a 2003 redistricting issue in North Carolina, pertaining to how VRA's Sec. 2 should be interpreted. LWVUS and state Leagues regularly weigh in on redistricting issues and vocally stand for fair and representative redistricting regardless of which party is in control. This year, Leagues across the country have advocated for a more transparent and balanced process for redistricting and testified against various Democratic and Republican plans on various grounds—the dilution of minority rights, partisan gerrymandering, nontransparent processes, and more. Most notably, our Leagues in IL and MD have vocally opposed overly partisan plans adopted by Democrat-controlled legislatures, and the IL League went so far as to file suit.

From Cheri Poucher, Wake County Board of Elections, in a statement to the Wake County delegation in the NC General Assembly

The Wake County Board of Elections reviewed the redistricting maps. We are concerned as in Wake County alone, there are 40 split Senate * VTDs, 48 split House VTDs and 9 split Congressional VTDs. We are hopeful that changes can be made prior to final approval to decrease the number of split VTDs.

Split VTDs are extremely confusing to the voters. With the current district lines in Wake County, there is a possibility of 18+ ballot styles in a particular precinct which will lead to voters questioning the correctness of their ballot. This questioning could lead to a dispute by the voter regarding the contests for which the voter is eligible to vote. The voter would then have to vote a provisional ballot as a jurisdictional dispute. In addition to creating voter confusion, splitting VTDs will increase the amount of resources necessary to train poll workers, print ballots, and research and process provisional ballots.

Splitting VTDs will also make it difficult for candidates of any party to determine election data by precinct. Thus, in order to limit voter confusion, minimize election training and processing expenses, and help candidates have useful post-election data, we urge you to consider these comments prior to voting on the district lines.

** Ed note: Voter tabulation district: often but not always identical to precincts*

The League Co-Sponsors 2011 Candidate Forums

By Marian Lewin

This fall, the League co-sponsored seven candidate forums with WakeUP Wake County and the North Carolina Center for Voter Education. We focused on the five Wake County Board of Education races, the City of Raleigh City Council and Mayoral races, and the Town of Cary Town Council races, a total of seven forums. This significant undertaking involved many League members in significant leadership roles. I would particularly like to thank Betty Ellerbee and Mary Martorella for their involvement in the planning phase and their attendance at all the forums. Mary Jane Slipsky and Marlyn Miller were the moderators at two of the forums. Louise Romanow, Marghitta Verghese, Elizabeth Fensin, Betty Ellerbee and Vicki Gerig served as timers at the forums. Pat Butler provided critical logistical assistance at several of the forum sites. Donna Weintraub, Jinny Batterson, Lisa Mowat, Agnes Stevens and Joan Sullivan were also hosts at some of the forums.

We worked closely with our co-sponsors, WakeUP Wake County and the NC Center for Voter Education to develop the issues and questions which would be posed at the individual forums. NCVE provided the equipment to record and broadcast the forums over the internet. WRAL-TV also recorded the forums and offered them on their website. This gave us a significant amount of exposure and great publicity for the League.

We were fortunate to be able to ride a political wave. The school board races received an unusual amount of scrutiny and attention from the national media and outside interest groups – from both sides of the political spectrum. It is difficult to know whether future local elections will be as partisan as this one was. It would be nice if, at least, the local electorate would be as interested and motivated to go to the polls for the next set of local races in 2013.

League to begin Hot Topics in January

The League will begin a series of Hot Topic meetings, to be held on the second Wednesday of the winter months, i.e., January 11, February 8th and March 14th. These meetings will be general discussion meetings on topics that either generate a great degree of interest over time or burst suddenly into the national conversation.

Time for all Hot Topics will be 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the league office on Haworth Drive (3509, Suite 404). If you need directions, you can always call the league office at 783-5995.

The January topic is immigration which continues to confound our Congress in addressing comprehensive reform of current policies. This has, in turn, caused many states to adopt their own policies. The LWVUS has a position on immigration, developed by consensus in 2009.

The February topic will be social media and discussion will focus on the ways in which social media has inspired social movements as well as looking into some ways we as individuals and as league members can engage in



LWVUS Position for Action
Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.



Welcome to new and newish members

Melanie Lane
1917 Castleburg Drive Apex



Melanie's interests are voters service, local school policies, immigration issues and affordable housing.

She has just graduated magna cum laude from UNCG and currently helps her husband manage his computer business and is looking forward to getting involved with League, an organization she greatly respects.

Nancy Moxley
4121 Picardy Drive Raleigh

Nancy's interests and/or expertise are schools, elections, housing, reading, finance and business/management. She is the chief judge of her precinct, a literacy tutor in schools and a Red Cross disaster volunteer and has a therapy dog which she takes to elementary schools.

Carolyn Morrison
900 Indian Trail Raleigh

Carolyn is a retired Wake County principal and has very recently retired from the Wake County School Board. She has been appointed to the NC Council for Women and looks forward to that new engagement as well as participating in league activities.

Linda Maxa
5812 Morning Forest Dr Raleigh

Linda is an accountant for a printing company in Raleigh and plans to retire next year. She is an active member of her church and is currently working on a family cookbook. She enjoys traveling with her husband Ed and their grown children. Linda joined the league because she has been searching for an organization which educates and informs citizens about important issues that affect their communities.

Damon Circosta

Damon is the executive director of North Carolina Center for Voter Education, one of the League's partners in the fall's candidate forums and a coalition partner of LWVNC. He has a law degree and has been an advocate for campaign finance reform and many other public policy issues at the NC General Assembly.

Gabrielle Brown
10812 Rio Bluff Drive Apt 108 Raleigh

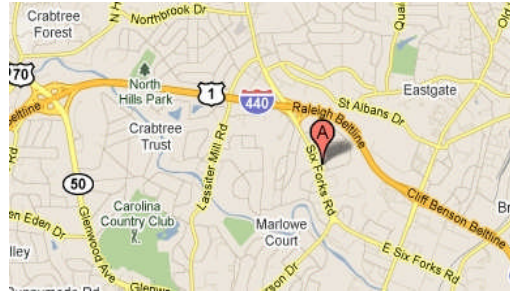
Gabrielle works as a Service Delivery Manager at IBM. She is working on a Masters in Public Administration and has five children.

Valerie Arendt
309 Canon Gate Dr Cary



Valerie moved to Cary from Minnesota. She has dual Masters degrees in Social Work and Public Policy. She has worked as a program manager in affordable housing. Her interests are public housing, refugees and immigrants.

League of Women Voters of Wake County
3509 Haworth Drive Suite 404
Raleigh NC 27609
919-783-5995
Www.lwvwake.org



Winter Calendar for League Meetings

December 8, Environmental Round Table, 11:50 a.m

K&W Cafeteria, Cameron Village,
Glen Anderson: Climate Change Update

December 11, Holiday Party at Claudia Kadis' home, 2-5 p.m.

4143 Gardenlake Dr, Raleigh 27612

January 4, 1:30-3:30, Education Committee,

League office, 3509 Haworth Drive Suite 404, 27609

January 11, 1:30-3:30 p.m,

Hot Topics: Immigration, League office, 3509 Haworth Drive, Suite 404, 27609

January 17, 10-12 a.m. Leadership Team at League office

January 27, 12 Noon

Lunch with the League, 554 E. Hargett St, Raleigh 27601

Speaker: Gary Bartlett, Executive Director, NC Board of Elections

February 1, 1:30-3:00, Education Committee

February 8, 1:30-3:30 pm

Hot Topics: Social Mediia, League office, 3509 Haworth Drive, Suite 404, 27609

February 24, 12 Noon

Lunch with the League, 554 E. Hargett St, Raleigh 27601

Speaker: Tom Vitaglione with Update on Children's Issues in North Carolina