

The Voter

League of Women Voters of the
Lower Cape Fear

10/1/2017

Letter from the President

As you've noticed, there is much activity in our Lower Cape Fear league now. Hot Topics continues on the fourth Mondays. Voter Service chairs are busy with voter registrations and forums. Our active league action teams (formally called "roundtables") include the areas of public education, redistricting of voting districts, and the environment. Information and details about all our activities can be found at our website lcfwv.org. I've found it handy to bookmark our site for easy access.

With our expanding membership there are plenty of opportunities to expand our programs so more of us

can become involved. Becoming active in an LAT (league action team) can be a satisfying and very interesting experience. The Board would love to restart our Immigration LAT, and we hope that groups addressing Women's Issues and Healthcare can be started and advance our league's program. Several committees (membership, voter services, observer corps, finances) are working to help run our league and they would welcome new members. I hope everyone will find an area of interest and become involved with our very active league!

Enjoy all the information in our newsletter...and many thanks to Ann Parvin, the *Voter* editor.

Carol Roberts

Save the Date!

Oct. 12 Environment Action Team. 3:00 PM
Coastal Federal SE Headquarters
309 W. Salisbury St. Wrightsville Beach

Oct. 19 Education Action Team. 10:00 AM YWCA
Corner of S. College Rd and Holly Tree

Oct. 23 Hot Topics. Mayor Eulis Willis, Navassa. The History of Navassa's Kerr-McGhee Super Fund Site. With the news of flooding of superfund sites in Texas, this is of particular concern to those states prone to hurricanes and flooding events.

Oct. 28 LWV-NC Council Meeting. Emerald Isle.
AM: Leadership Training
PM: Advocacy 101 Training open to all league members. Carpooling available, contact Carol Roberts. Register at <http://lwvnc.org/act/council/>

Action Team Reports – Membership

Since our annual meeting in June, six new members have joined our League. They are: Leslie Antos, Debbie Willis, Lynn Whitmore, Dorothy Holt, Julie Jordan, and Wynn Wagenseil. Please welcome them when you see them at Hot Topics.

As of now, we have ninety-seven members, with some renewals yet to be received. Thirty-six of our members live in Brunswick County, and two are from Pender County. The remaining members live in New Hanover County.

Action Team Reports – Environmental

We meet on the second Thursday of each month at the NC Coastal Federation Headquarters, 309 W. Salisbury St., Wrightsville Beach. On October 12 we hope to focus on the many issues of river water quality as part of our focus on all issues about water. Watch the web site calendar for specific information. Everyone is welcome.

We continue to monitor the New Hanover County Unified Development Ordinance, Eagles Island Development, Off Shore Oil and Gas Drilling, and the Brunswick Superfund Sites. We find the Clean Cape Fear site (cleancapefear.org) a decent resource for the GenX situation. Thanks to all who wrote the Governor and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management regarding off shore oil and gas drilling off the NC shore.

Join Observer Corps – We Need You!

Attend governmental meetings, take notes and report back so members will be informed.

Learn about community issues and monitor how they are being addressed.

Promote open, transparent and accountable government.

We observe at Board of Elections, Board of Education, and County Commissioners meetings. We particularly need more observers in New Hanover County. Please contact Loraine Buker, lbuker1@earthlink.net, for more information.

JoAnne Stevenson “ Being an observer provides opportunities to see county government in action, to learn about the issues and plans of the county, and to hear resident concerns. As someone new to the area, these insights are especially helpful. It is also an opportunity to represent the League as part of the community.”

Anne Eitelman “Being regular observers at school board meetings has allowed us to build relationships and respect with the board members, and has facilitated our ability to communicate with different board members as needed. This is especially important in situations where we may disagree with their proposals. It has also allowed us to better understand the history and complexities behind issues.”

Action Team Reports – Voter Services

Brunswick County Candidate Forums

October 4, Leland Town Hall, 6:30 - municipal candidates; 7:45 - H2GO candidates.

October 16, Southport Community Bldg. 223 E. Bay St., 6:30 - municipal candidates.

October 18, Oak Island Town Hall, 6:00 - municipal candidates.

New Hanover County Candidate Forums

September 26, MLK Center, 6 PM - municipal candidates (sponsored by NAACP)

County Boards of Election and some of the Challenges in 2017 by Gail F. Bromley

Who makes up a Board of Elections and how might that change?

County Boards of Elections have routinely been made up of three members, each appointed by their respective political parties. For many years, there have been two members from the party of the Governor and one from the other major political party. However, in 2017, the NC General Assembly leadership sought to change that and passed legislation that makes each county board a four member board, two from each major party, with chairperson control in the hands of the Legislative party in power during even numbered election years. These changes altered the political landscape. The Legislature made changes to the State Board of Elections as well with the merging of the State Board of Elections with the Ethics Commission. These changes for how Election Boards are structured are currently being challenged in the Courts and county boards await a decision. This state of limbo makes doing regular business awkward and hard.

As Boards of Elections remain uncertain of their composition for overseeing elections, municipal elections proceed with the retention of the existing county boards managing the effort. However, in order to take decisive actions, all three board members must be in agreement on how things will work. The future of what makes up a county board of elections remains unclear. Any resolution to this will likely take place after the elections in 2017 are completed. Stay tuned.

Have you ever wondered how many poll workers it takes to put on an election?

I spoke with county elections officials to find out how many poll workers it takes to put on an election during municipal elections and beyond. Staff at the Board of Elections must recruit and train more than the number they need as some who are recruited find that they are unable to fulfill their roles as poll workers. Poll workers who are at the polls on Election Day, must be there for the duration of the time the polls are open. It can be a daunting task and involve nearly 13-14 hours of work on that day. Factors affecting the number of poll workers a county needs are based on factors such as county resources that can be devoted to elections, the density of voters at precincts, the number of precincts, etc.

For municipal elections in Brunswick County, it takes around 175 poll workers. For a Presidential Election year, the number of poll workers needed jumps to over 300. For general election years or even numbered years that do not have Presidential races, the numbers of poll workers required falls somewhere in between.

For New Hanover County, a total of 220 poll workers are sought for municipal elections and almost 600 for Presidential year elections. New Hanover tends to have more poll workers at precincts than other

local counties. In Pender, the numbers are less with around 30 for municipal elections and 130 during Presidential election years.

Who pays for municipal elections?

The municipalities within a county pay the County Boards of Elections to administer elections for them. This cost to the municipalities affects the amount of resources devoted to staff the elections. For each of our counties, all early voting takes place at the Board of Elections offices.

Early Voting starts on Thursday, October 19 and concludes on Saturday, November 4. Check your county board website for more details on times when the early voting sites are open.

Action Team – Fair Elections (FEAT)

Redistricting for Fair Elections!

January 18, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lumina Theater at the Fisher Center at UNCW.

Come hear Judge Tom Ross, also former UNC System President, give a presentation on how gerrymandering is undermining our democracy. Judge Ross is a strong advocate for redistricting Reform. More details forthcoming.

FEAT meeting with event co-sponsor Alpha Psi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



Action Team Reports – Education

Education Action Team members volunteered at Johnson Pre-K Center over the summer. The inventory of surplus books was completed, garden plots were prepared for planting, and curtain panels for classroom doors were begun.

Bonnie Bechard will continue her extensive research on vouchers this fall. Visits to observe NC Pre-K sites, both public and private, are planned for the coming months. We also plan personal one-on-one visits with public officials to form relationships and share some of our research on educational topics. We will prepare a statement to the New Hanover County Board of Education supporting racial and socio-economic integration of schools as a necessary condition for equal access to a quality education and to express serious concern about any redistricting plan which does not promote diversity and which creates high poverty schools. This statement will be sent to our local board for approval.

Educating ourselves and the public at large on issues and challenges of educating our children remains our overall goal.



Do you have an interest in history? How can our league recognize Women's History Month, which is in March?

If you have an idea or would enjoy planning a recognition or an event with some others for this month please contact Carol Roberts or anyone on the Board. We'd love to hear some creative ideas!

September 18, 2017 –VR at Naturalization Ceremony

For the third year in a row, the Wilmington Ladies Tea Walk Chapter of the NSDAR invited the LWVLCF to register new citizens following a Naturalization Ceremony. This year's event took place at the Battleship North Carolina at 11:00 am on September 18, 2017. Three of our members (Sheila Fellerath, Sandra Sink, and Johnette Fields) were present for the impressive ceremony, highlighted by patriotic music by the Ashley High School band, speeches by several dignitaries, and an impressive swearing in ceremony. Eleven of the twenty-five new citizens registered to vote. Their pride and excitement, as always, was very heartening to our volunteers.



*League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape Fear
SERVING BRUNSWICK, NEW HANOVER, PENDER COUNTIES*

League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape Fear

P.O. Box 4503 Wilmington, NC 28406

For a calendar of monthly activities, including public Hot Topic luncheons, Round Table meetings, open Board meeting, go to our website at www.lcflwv.org

Read more about us online at...

www.facebook.com/LWVLCF

www.twitter.com/LWVoftheLCF

