

The Voter

League of Women Voters of the
Lower Cape Fear

5/15/2017

Letter from the President

I've recently read a book with the somewhat racy title *Because of Sex*. In fact, it is a well-researched and written account of how an eleventh-hour amendment to Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act changed the work lives of American women. The author, Gillian Thomas, details the enactment of the amendment and the fifty-year litigation effort that followed, trying to establish just what a ban on discrimination in employment "because of sex" meant.

The book's subject matter is fascinating but also led me to reflect on some other themes. One of them is the importance of language in highly charged situations. The "because of sex" amendment was adopted without any congressional hearings, committee reports or other legislative history; this left interpretation of the language to resistant employers, the sometimes reluctant EEOC, and ultimately the courts. There are times when it is critical to say precisely what you mean, no more or less, and to consider carefully the nuances and unintended consequences of word choices. As League members we find ourselves called upon more and more frequently to partner with other

organizations with which we may share some, but not all, viewpoints. We need to remain vigilant when we speak or act in the name of the League.

Another theme emerging from the book is that of tenacity. There are many unsung heroines here, described by the author as [mostly] "middle or working class, ...[fighting] their cases alone for years, save for their dedicated attorneys." These brave, stalwart and unassuming women didn't set out to create Supreme Court precedents; they simply wanted the right to work without being disadvantaged because of their sex. The issues spanned a wide range and took decades to resolve - from equal pay to advancement opportunities, qualifications for employment, reproductive status, preferential hiring and more.

Like these women, the League has a history of taking the long view; we need to call on that legacy to buoy us in times that seem particularly challenging. It matters that we continue to show up, to advocate, to speak out, to educate others, and to build relationships where only suspicion existed

previously. We know how to do this and as the League of Women Voters we will continue to make a difference - if not today, then tomorrow and beyond.

Sheila Fellerath, President

LWV Lower Cape Fear

Save the Date!

Please join us for our
Annual Meeting on
Monday, June 26th at
Macgrooders in Leland.
Details to be emailed
soon!

Recent New Members...

We are growing! Welcome to the many new members. Since July 1, 2016, we have grown by 28. As of April 25, our membership is at 101. We celebrated our new members with a party hosted by Sandra Sink on April 3. Good food, good conversation and some orientation made for a lovely evening.

Margaret Ebeltoft –

Prior to retirement in 2012, I was employed as a Registered Nurse with the Public Health Nursing Office of Saratoga Springs, NY. I was the Quality Assurance Nurse there as well as Nurse Case Manager and previously a cardiac intensive care nurse. I have two grown daughters and one grandson. My hobbies include, reading, gardening and travelling. I look forward to becoming involved in the local League of Women Voters and have a special interest in Women and Children Public Health issues.

Musette Dunn Steck –

A resident of Southport, Musette is a native North Carolinian, and graduate of Duke and UNCG. She has taught at the secondary and community college levels. Continuing in the tradition of her family, the Kitchins, she has run for and won political office, served on numerous non-profit Boards, and worked on specific issues for the improvement of the community such as ERA,

environment, interracial relations, and recently marched in the Raleigh Women's March. In Southport, her work with the Historical Society has concentrated on the 1792 Burying Ground, writing monthly columns for the *State Port Pilot*, and supporting the new Black History Weekend. She says she was privileged to go with the Mt. Carmel AME Church to the funeral of Dr. Pinckney in Charleston. Formerly a member of the LWV of Greensboro.

Mary Ellen Cole -

Recent transplant from inside the beltway of D.C. & moved to Brunswick Forest when I retired from County government. I am a widow & have 3 adult children. My mother in law was a long time League member, and I promised I would join when I "have the time" and now I do. I am very interested in learning more about government from a different angle.

I hope to use my limited computer talents to help with the league website & emails. I am also very interested in observing County meetings.

Nan Seamans-

returned to Wilmington in 2013 following her retirement from Georgia State University in Atlanta. She is a librarian and worked for over 40 years in public, academic and special libraries in NC, VA, IA, and GA. She is particularly interested in voter registration and redistricting.

JoAnne Stevenson –

My husband and I moved to North Carolina from Massachusetts at the end of 2015, just in time to escape the cold. While in Massachusetts, my professional focus was in Information Technology with the last 20+ years working in higher ed. Currently I am retired and enjoying the freedom of being able to do whatever, whenever. The League's mission to protect and engage voters attracted me to the organization.

Randi Clegg-

In 2015, my husband, Paul, and I moved into the home we built in Brunswick Forest, and we are very pleased with our decision to relocate here after we retired. Before we retired, we worked for over 30 years at Raytheon Company (a major aero defense company) based in Massachusetts so a warm climate was definitely in the cards. Supply Chain was my specialty, focused on contract management, auditing, training and policies. We are thoroughly enjoying our new friends and the arts and entertainment we are fortunate to have close by. The flora can be found all year round, we can walk outside most every day, we are learning to golf, and there is no snow!! As for my interest in joining the League, it offers a vehicle to learn about, reach out and to speak up about issues upon which women can have an impact and issues which impact us.

Hayley Swinson.-

I'm a manager at a new rock climbing gym in Porter's Neck called Wilmington Rock Gym. I originally moved to Wilmington in early 2012 to work as a Costumer for Film. I have my BA in French Studies and Creative Writing from the University of Richmond (2010) and an MA in Creative Writing: Prose from the University of Edinburgh (2014). I've recently been accepted into a low-residency MFA program for Fiction Writing at Queens University in Charlotte. Once I finish my degree, I am hoping to find a job teaching creative writing at the collegiate level. I have many interests, but am currently focused on reading and writing, rock climbing, Japanese JuJutsu with local club Shoshin Ryu/Cape Fear Budo, and recently gardening. Though as yet I have not yet been able to attend any LWV meetings, I hope to get more involved in the near future. I am especially interested in education reform and women's rights. Getting politically involved on a local and regional level is very important to me, and I think the LWV will help me to stay more informed and to try to make a difference in our community.

Sarah Hoss P.E.-

I am a Professional Electrical Engineer, working Duke Power for 23 years at Brunswick and Catawba nuclear plants in Systems, I&C and Programs. Earlier in life I was a Registered Nurse working in Emergency Rooms and Public Health.

Family life includes two adult sons, their wives, and one grandson. (Phillip Andrew Kash, Maggie Kao Kash, Conrad Yu-Sheng Kash, Steven Robert Bush, and Elisabeth Bush)

Other interests: bicycling, swimming, reading, and more recently a focus on women's rights in the current NC and national political climate.

Sarah Stanhope-

A "PK" (Preacher's Kid"), Sarah grew up in North Carolina in the Piedmont Region. Her father was a Methodist minister so her family lived in various places-- Andrews in the Smoky Mountains, Cornelius near Charlotte, Archdale near High Point, and Greensboro. She moved up North to attend graduate school. Boston was her home for four years before her move to a beautiful farm in New Hampshire where she lived for over 50 years with her husband and two sons. In October 2014, she came back "home" and lives in Magnolia Greens.

She was graduated from Duke University with a major in Sociology in 1960. She attended Smith College School for Social Work receiving her Masters of Social Work in 1962.

Sarah worked in the Boston area at the Bedford VA hospital and then at the Boston University Medical Center in the Department of Psychiatry. In New Hampshire, she worked at the Community Guidance Center, a private, non-profit mental health center (precursor to The Manchester Mental Health

Center), The Cystic Fibrosis Clinic, and the State of New Hampshire's Bureau for Handicapped Children SSI Program. In 1980, assisted in establishing an outpatient clinic for low-income pediatric patients and their families, called Child Health Services. She was the Director of Social Work there until her retirement in 2001.

Having never been a member before, as she likes the League's promotion and advocacy of social justice and healthy and happy families and citizens and feels will be a nice fit.

Shirley Lerch Crum-

Retired this year as the department head of humanities at Coastal Carolina Community College in Jacksonville. Originally from Cleveland Ohio. I joined the League to take a more active role in issues that affect our community.

Tena R. Wright, Ed.D. -

A retired educator from New Jersey and New York working as a science teacher, administrator and adjunct professor. Retired in 2010 after a 30 year career in the field. Served as both an education coach and personal coach. Moved to Leland, NC in August and is enjoying the weather and all that the Wilmington area has to offer. An avid bridge player and patron of the theater and art galleries and museums. A former League of Women voters in Cranford, NJ and wants to continue advocating for citizenship and voting participation.

MEET FIVE NEW LEAGUE OBSERVERS!



Tena Wright

Brunswick Board of Education



JoAnne Stevenson

Brunswick Board
of Commissioners



Mary Ellen Cole

Brunswick Board
of Commissioners



Sarah Hoss

Brunswick Board
of Commissioners



Donna Howard

Pender Board of Elections
(continuing)

LWV-LCF Observer Corps...what do we do?

- *We attend governmental meetings, take notes, and report back so members will be informed
- *We learn about community issues and monitor how they are being addressed
- *We keep officials on notice that we are a witness to decisions
- *We are there to gather information and get to know our elected officials; we do not make statements or comments during the meetings

[Report from LWV North Carolina 2017 Convention](#)

Gail Bromley, Carole Ellis, Sheila Fellerath and Carol Roberts represented the LWV Lower Cape Fear as voting delegates at the state convention held in Greensboro May 5-7, 2017. Jana Albritton, LCF member, was also in attendance as a member of the state board.

The schedule was jam-packed with speakers, workshops, breakout sessions and business meetings. Here are just a couple of reports from your delegates.

From Carol Roberts:

Participating in the Greensboro convention was enjoyable, educational, stimulating, and energizing! The sessions, workshops and caucuses provided us with much worthwhile knowledge to bring back to our local leagues.

A workshop about League Action Teams was especially interesting to me. *This is a term that has begun to take precedence over the use of the term "roundtable" at the NC and US levels of the League.* League action teams (LATS) were just recently established by the LWVNC Board to help intercommunication between local leagues so that information could be funneled through established state action teams with chair facilitators. This is meant to promote communication between our ~1600 statewide members for idea sharing on specific issues. LATS will be a way to harness efforts and energy across the state and not "reinvent the wheel" when it comes to solving problems and looking for solutions to issues.

At this time, League Action Teams have been established for Education, Environment, ERA, Fair elections,

Gun Violence Prevention, Health Care, Voter Services, and Immigration. Contacts with the state LAC's are found on the LWVNC website. This is the place to sign up and get involved. Our local roundtables now have an additional source for information and ideas.

From Gail Bromley:

Carole Ellis and I attended a breakout session for the Fair Elections Action Team. The main topic concentrated on Redistricting Reform. Attendance was impressive at this session with several local Leagues represented.

Even though the proposed redistricting bills in the General Assembly are dead for this year, the campaign to pass and implement reform is still a major emphasis for the LWVNC; there will be a coordinated effort to identify best steps to help get a change in how our state's district lines are drawn. We will advocate to end gerrymandering and work for a nonpartisan way to address the problem.

The State Action Team will be developing resources for education, speaker bureaus, and talking points for use with legislators. Meanwhile, some will also try to help identify what should be used in any new bill for a future session. Current court cases will be followed closely and status reported to team members.

Please stay tuned and contact either Gail Bromley or Barbara Burrell to be part of our team to work on this. We have chosen this topic as a priority for our local League.

From Carole Ellis:

One of the most informative sessions at the NC League of Women Voters Convention was a presentation by Derb Carter, Jr., Executive Director

of the Chapel Hill office of the Southern Environmental Law Center. His topic was From Mountain Streams to the Ocean: Problems and Solutions.

Mr. Carter talked about the importance of clean water to the North Carolina population, bemoaning the fact that those in authority in the state do not seem to be worried. He said that it is important that we keep the mountain streams that feed the water system clear, but no one is presently assured that that is happening. He particularly discussed the condition of the Neuse and Cape Fear Rivers, stating that these rivers are so polluted that there are regular fish kills. He reported that in order to avoid requiring hog and poultry producers just up river from us to clean up their act, the Cape Fear area here around our river walk might be declared a swamp area. All of this was disturbing to me because without clean water how can we progress? Huge numbers of people are moving into this area that will want to have clean water yet it seems no one in authority is doing anything to assure that it continues to be clean.

Mr. Carter was also concerned about the coal ash deposits and remarked that DENR in our state

has sustained too many budget cuts to really be effective in watching over our water supply. And finally he remarked about the fact that our state lawmakers have said that our environment needs to be no cleaner than what the EPA requires and we all know what has recently happened to the EPA.

From Sheila Fellerath:

I attended a caucus on Changing the Judicial Selection Process in North Carolina; the room was almost full despite the early hour (7:30 Sunday morning!). Lisa Gordon Stella, a Durham attorney, reviewed the history of judicial selection in North Carolina, the recommendations of the NC Commission on the Administration of Law & Justice (<https://nccalj.org/final-report/>), current judicial selection in North Carolina and recent actions by the General Assembly. The trend appears to be toward partisan, party-driven judicial selection processes with the inevitable risk of compromising the integrity and independence of our state court system.

This group is in the initial stage of organizing and expects to focus on education, tracking legislative developments and studying the issues with the goal of developing a League position that can then be used for advocacy.

Our Award Winning League!

The League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape Fear received the League of Women Voters of North Carolina Outstanding Local League Award (40 or more members). This award recognizes effectiveness in promoting voter education and participation in government at the local, state and national levels, membership growth, effecting issues of local, state and national interest, outstanding programs and events over the past two years and collaboration with local and state partners and other local Leagues. Congratulations to us all!

In a clean sweep, our own Gail Bromley was one of two recipients

of the Gertrude Weil Award for Leadership and Service. This award, honoring the founder of the North Carolina League of Women Voters, is the highest award given to an individual League member in NC. The Gertrude Weil Award represents courage, vision, tenacity, commitment and dedication to the mission and purpose of the League of Women Voters that has been demonstrated through service and leadership at the local, state and/or national levels. Congratulations to Gail!

We will celebrate these achievements at our Annual Meeting but I wanted to share the good news and a couple of photos right away. It was an honor to accept this award on behalf of all of you!

Sheila Fellerath, President
LWV Lower Cape Fear



Sheila Fellerath accepts award from Margaret Salinger, LWVNC Co-President



Carol Roberts, Jana Albritton, Sheila Fellerath, Carole Ellis and Gail Bromley



Gail Bromley accepts award from Margaret Salinger, LWVNC Co-President

*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

