

The Voter

League of Women Voters of the
Lower Cape Fear

1/15/2017

Letter from the President

I'm writing this message in the waning days of 2016, trying to put the past year in perspective while looking ahead with a hopeful spirit toward the New Year. Sometimes that's a tall order and I think we can all agree that this year has been a real challenge. But we've been here before.

I was reminded of this while watching a PBS program called *JFK & LBJ: A Time for Greatness*, set in the tumultuous first year or two following the assassination of President Kennedy. These days we mostly associate President Johnson with the tragedy of the Vietnam War but it should not be forgotten that he was a real champion of civil rights. He had the vision and will to push through the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the subsequent Voting Rights Act of 1965 as a lasting legacy to the fallen president. What history has revealed is that Johnson was strongly committed to civil rights well before his unexpected presidency and that, indeed, he was really ahead of the reluctant Kennedy on this issue. Vice president Johnson gave a remarkable speech at Gettysburg on Memorial Day 1963, observing:

As we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too—

a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people--so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain.

The voice of responsible Americans—the voice of those who died here and the great man who spoke here--their voices say, "Together." There is no other way.

Although we haven't officially turned the page to 2017 as I write, there are already important events penciled in on the League calendar. I hope you will find something in this newsletter that interests and motivates you to stay engaged in the vital work of democracy that is the mission of the League of Women Voters. Answer the call for volunteers, stretch yourself a little and together we will advance the cause of justice "in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all".

A very happy New Year!

Sheila Fellerath, President

LWV Lower Cape Fear

Save these dates!

January 31 is the date and Wrightsville Beach is the place!

We are participating with coalition partners in an "Across the Line" interactive film and educational opportunity centering on a woman's right to accessing reproductive healthcare. We will share this exciting opportunity with you as soon as more details are ironed out.

Saturday, February 25th

9:30-12:00 NH County Public Library, Oak Room, 1241 Military Cutoff Road

2017-2018 Program Planning Meeting. Join fellow League members for a review of our 2016-2017 accomplishments. Then help propose what we'd like to work on for the coming League year. The proposals from this meeting will be reviewed by the board and voted on by the membership at our Annual Meeting in June. Help us decide what to do in the challenging year ahead!

Recent New Member....

Bio for Mary Ann Stibbe

A long time ago when I was young and did not have so many children, I was a member of LWV and AAUW. Those associations provide a framework for research, self-directed study, and action. A move, more children, and additional schooling became my priorities. When two of our four children had moved on to postsecondary education, I, at 50, took the first job I had had since age 28. That position (Adrian College) followed by Lourdes University and then by the University of Toledo were in higher education. In these positions, I worked with first generation college students, under-prepared students, and students with disabilities. At Adrian College, I also directed a federally funded Trio grant (Student Support Services) which served the students named above. How did I prepare for this career? I received a BS in English education at Bowling Green State University (Ohio). I graduated from the University of Toledo with a Masters in Reading Disabilities and a PhD in Curriculum Instruction with a minor in special education. Moving from OH to NC entangled me in a political environment that I could not understand. I needed to know who I am voting for, what I am voting for, and why I am making the choices I do. I need to know the tangles, who is tangling, and who is untangling. Where can I learn about the issues and the politics of NC and the Nation? The League of Women Voters.

Holiday Social Gathering at Front Street Brewery



January Hot Topic:

Janet Hoy, a Director of LWV North Carolina, will speak on State League initiatives for 2017, activities of the various Action Teams, and plans to increase lobbying of the NCGA on issues important to both the state and national leagues.

Please join us on Monday, January 23rd at Mc Allister's Deli at 740 S. College Road, Wilmington, NC 28403. Lunch at 11:30; the program is from noon to 1:00 pm.

Roundtable Reports....

Education Roundtable is focusing its activities on 3 areas for 2017. The first is to improve public awareness of the benefits of early childhood education as we advocate for increased access to quality Pre-K education, particularly for children from low income families. As part of this effort we will be assisting Smart Start with their Community Summit on February 20, 2017. The Summit's purpose is "Framing our Message: Communicating on Behalf of Young Children." Our second focus area is looking at the issue of increased tax payer funding for private school vouchers, and what kinds of schools are being awarded most of these vouchers in NC. Finally we are creating a position statement on the issue of the redistricting of schools in New Hanover County. Members of our roundtable attend the New Hanover and Brunswick County Boards of Education meetings to keep apprised of education issues in our communities.

We have recently changed our meeting time and place. We will now be meeting the third Thursday of each month at the YWCA (on the corner of South College Road and Holly Tree, across from Long Leaf Mall). Our next meeting will be on January 19, 2017 from 10:00 - 12:00.

Anne Eitelman

Nancy McCoy-Fennell

Co-chairs Education

Roundtable

Good and Not so Good News from the Environmental Roundtable

Good News: The NC Coastal Federation awarded us the Volunteer of the Year award for our efforts to improve the New Hanover County (NHC) Special Use Permit. Thank you to the many folks who contributed time attending meetings, testifying at hearings, calling people. You all did a great job!!!

Less than good news: The Special Use Permit being brought forward to the Board of Commissions by the NHC Planning Board omits all mention of “reporting of external effects” by intensive industry. Thus, this version is worse than the SUP currently in effect. Also, the Table of Permitted Uses is in the process of being modified to increase the intensive industries permitted in the current “general” zone. The result: Industries like Basic Chemical Manufacturing would be permitted close to residential areas. This reclassification is legal, but will have an effect on persons owning nearby homes.

WE REALLY WILL NEED YOU for the Public Hearing before the NHC Board of Commissioners. See date below. Please plan to attend to show that citizens really do care about a clean environment. At this event, the LWVLCF will stress the importance of preempting future costly environmental issues by requiring heavy industries report external effect of their industrial process.

New Hanover County Planning Board Schedules Public Hearing on Proposed Special Use Permit

Date: Thursday, Feb. 2 **Time:** 6:00-8:00 PM **Place:**

NHC Historic Courthouse Commissioners Room

Please attend. This hearing will replace the regular first Thursday of the month Environment Roundtable meeting.

Clarice Reber

Voter Services

County Board of

Elections: Members continue to observe some county Board of Elections meetings. While there were protests at both New Hanover and Brunswick Counties on the vote count, these did not change the results of the local tally in any significant way. Some observation of absentee ballot counting was undertaken.

Voter Registration Drives: An approximate tally of voter registrations before the 2016 election was provided for the State League. We registered nearly 700 individuals and gave out thousands of printed materials to help voters in the voting process. In addition, presentations and trainings for others were conducted at many new venues.

Candidate Forms: Early in 2017, Gail Bromley will meet with Jon Evans to discuss the 2016

year's seven candidate forums. Overall, Jon and Gail feel positively about the events and all candidates invited participated. Attendance was fairly good but the forums in Leland had to be postponed due to Hurricane Matthew and that affected attendance at the Leland Town Hall. Our experience with forums was quite different from some of the other areas of the state, as several were canceled due to candidates not agreeing to participate. Gail will also try to introduce Jon to her successors in both New Hanover and Brunswick counties. This should help in the transition. **She needs someone to be willing to be Voter Services Chair in New Hanover for July 2017-June 2019.** If we are to continue providing these programs in New Hanover county, it is vital that someone step up to head the effort.

2017: Also in early 2017, a special training for those who want to be involved in voter registration drives will be conducted. We will continue to highlight some voter protection programs in our Hot Topics offerings as well as special presentations. If you have comments or suggestions to offer for voter services, please contact

Gail Bromley, Voter Services Chair at gailfbromley@gmail.com.

Join OBSERVER CORPS

Be a part of our league's
Observer Corp and help stay
informed about the actions and
plans of our local government.

Being an observer and keeping
our league up to date helps
promote open, transparent and
accountable government.

MEET YOUR LEAGUE OBSERVERS!



Barbara Brandes
Brunswick Board of Ed.



Beth Kirschner
Brunswick Board of Elections



Gail Bromley
Brunswick Board of Elections



Carol Roberts
Brunswick Board of Ed.



Loraine Buker
NHC Board of Commissioners



Georgia Morgan
NHC Board of Commissioners



Roselyn Upchurch
NHC Board of commissioners



Meredith Glicksman
NHC Board of Elections



Nancy McCoy-Fennel
NHC Board of Education

League Observers support the citizens' *right to know* about its government by attending public meetings to learn about and keep current on local government proceedings. They become aware about the issues facing the community and then report back to our league with a short report for any needed advocacy or action. More volunteers are needed to expand our coverage. Please contact Carol Roberts for information.

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

