

The Voter of ODC



Inside this issue:

- April– May meetings 1
- President's message 2
- Voter Forums 3
- Announcements 4
- Positions 5
- Membership 6
- Nominations 7
- Election calendar 8

General Meeting March 16

Hargraves Center, Carrboro, 10 a.m.

Orange County Commissioner Barry Jacobs and Chatham County Commissioner Mike Cross will discuss current issues in their respective areas. Don't miss this opportunity to learn first-hand about controversies, such as land use, real estate development, voter registration, election practices, redistricting, and water quality, which are common to the three county environments and impact all Orange, Durham, Chatham citizens. Our February meeting highlighted, Ellen Reckhow, Chair of the Durham County Commissioners, speaking on local and regional transportation issues.

General Meeting April 20

Hargraves Center, Carrboro, 10 a.m.

Money in Politics Task Force Meeting. This meeting will be chaired by Patricia Watts Hill, task force group leader, and will feature a talk on campaign finance reforms from Bob Hall of Democracy North Carolina. A question and answer period moderated by Molly Beacham, from Democracy NC and also a LWVODC member, will follow the talk. Refreshments will be served. See more on page 4.

The Hargraves Center is located at 215 N. Roberson Street in Chapel Hill. If you continue west on Rosemary Street from the center of Chapel Hill, turn right at the traffic light past Mama Dips.

Annual meeting May 24

Governor's Club Ballroom, 6 p.m.

The Annual Meeting will feature a cocktail reception and dinner, followed by the Annual Meeting. Our featured speaker will be Professor Ann Dunbar, Associate Professor in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies at UNC Chapel Hill. Her talk will be "Muslim Women and Political Change: Some Case Studies from Africa South of the Sahara." Prof. Dunbar specializes in African social history with a focus on women, law and women's civic organizations primarily within Muslim communities. This promises to be an exciting talk and of interest to League members and their guests.

Mark your calendars for this event and send your checks for \$25 per person, made out to LWVODC, to

Joyce Colaiace
437 Fearrington Post
Pittsboro, NC 27312

The deadline for reservations is Friday May 19.

Upcoming Events

General Meetings

March 16
Hargraves Center
April 20
Hargraves Center

Annual Meeting
May 24
Governor's Club

See the 2006 election calendar on back page

Voter Forums will be held in all three Counties in April

Eve Barkley, Voter Services

Orange County, April 19

A forum for candidates for Orange County Commissioners will be held at the F. Gordon Battle Court Room in Hillsborough from 7 to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19. Molly Beacham will be the moderator. If you want to volunteer for the forum or have any questions, contact Eve Barkley, 919-401-1843 or ebarkley@itconcerto.com.

Chatham County, April 4th

The LWV-ODC will sponsor a Forum for candidates for the County Commissioners Board on the evening of Tuesday, April 4th. The Forum will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Superior Court House, the building inside Pittsboro’s central traffic circle. Brenda Rogers will moderate.

There are seven candidates and so far six have agreed to participate. Those running are George Lucier and Mary Delois Nettles for District Three; Karl Ernst, Bunkey Morgan and Tom Vanderbeck for District Four; Tommy Emerson and Carl E. Thompson for District Five. All are Democrats, except for Karl Ernst, who is a Republican.

Each candidate will be allowed up to two minutes for an opening statement. The Moderator will then direct questions to the candidates, who will each have one minute to respond. Questions will be from the League as well as written questions submitted by the audience. The League questions will be directed to all candidates, while the audience questions may be directed to one or more or to all of the candidates. Any candidate not specifically addressed may also respond. At the end of the question period, each candidate will be allowed up to one minute for a closing statement.

The Forum is timed to be just before One Stop Voting begins on April 7th. This is an important election for Chatham, which is entering a period of very rapid growth, and a large turnout for the Forum is expected.

If you need more information or want to volunteer, call Anne Bodner.

Durham County, April 6 and April 18

In Durham LWV-ODC along with the NCCU Civic Engagement Task Force and Democracy NC will hold a forum for candidates for Durham School Board at the NCCU School of Education Auditorium from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, April 6th. The moderator will be Robbie Willmarth.

Then on Tuesday, April 18, the LWV-ODC and the Durham County Library will sponsor a forum from 7 to 9 p.m. for candidates for U.S. Congressional District 4, N.C. House District 29, County Sheriff and County District Attorney. The moderator will be Sylvia Kerckhoff.

If you have any questions about either forum or want to volunteer, please contact Bessie Carrington, bessiec@mindspring.com or Molly Beacham, mollybeacham@democracy-nc.org

Plan to attend any or all of these forums. This is a basic activity of the League of Women Voters.

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THE MONEY IN POLITICS TASK FORCE PRESENTS --

“Fulfilling the Promise of Democracy in North Carolina”

Bob Hall, the director of Democracy North Carolina, is our speaker. Hall has served on numerous commissions, provided expert testimony in court cases on election law, and consulted with officials in a dozen states on voting rights and campaign finance reforms. His research regarding elections in North Carolina is cited in hundreds of news stories, is used by law enforcement agencies to prosecute wrongdoers, and has helped advance specific reforms, such a 1997 law requiring greater disclosure of campaign finances and a 2002 law that offers public financing for statewide judicial candidates

Democracy North Carolina, a non-partisan research, organizing and advocacy center (of which the LWVNC is a founding member) works to fulfill the promise of "one person, one vote" - the bedrock principle of equal rights and self-determination. Its innovative research exposes how citizens are harmed by special-interest money and outdated voting methods and its grassroots efforts continue to reduce the influence of big money and increasing voter involvement.

Our speaker will also bring us up to date on state level campaign finance reform, lobbying reform, and pending legislation at the N.C. General Assembly -- all issues that the LWV has positions at National, State and Local levels. In recent months newspapers across the state have been full of articles on campaign finance and lobbying abuses and Hall has all the behind the headlines information to share with us.

Do not miss this great opportunity on April 20th. Bring a friend and your questions about “money in politics” for our speaker.

Citizens Guide

Thanks to the good work of Nancy Salmon and her diligent committee, the **Citizens Guide, 2005-2006**, is now available in paper copies and on our website, www.lwvdc.org. Printed by the *Chapel Hill News*, paper copies are being distributed in public venues throughout the three county area.



Rep. Paul Luebke and Karsten Rist discuss
the state of things at Panzanella

Report of General meeting, February 16

On February 16 League members met at the Hargraves Center for a working session to review past, present and future local League positions. Molly Beacham of Democracy NC explained the LWV-NC initiative to enable same day registration during the early voting period. Presented as HB851, approval of this legislation will extend the voter registration period during one stop voting. This is expected to encourage 18-24



Peggy Misch at the working session

year old citizens to register and vote at the same time. Once a registrant qualifies with valid ID, a provisional vote is permitted. The Board of Elections will then follow normal procedures to mail a registration card; if the card is not returned, then the provisional ballot will be counted. The registration process is controlled by the Board of Elections; a street address is mandatory. The process will require an extension of the canvas period to allow enough time for the mailing process.

League members then separated into three groups to review past positions for currency and to add new positions for our local League. Spirited discussions proposed many topics for positions, which will determine our program for the next year. These positions will be approved at the Annual Meeting. Look for a complete list in the April *Voter*.

New proposal for Electoral College

Last year our local Electoral College focus group urged our organization to lobby other Leagues in N.C. to propose that the N.C. legislature amend its method of casting presidential electoral votes. We wanted the N.C. ballots cast proportionately to the actual overall popular vote in our state, rather than the present method of winner take all.

Now a group including FairVote, Common Cause and a bi-partisan group of former members of Congress has proposed a new plan allowing individual states to form an interstate compact to cast their electoral votes according to the winner of the national popular vote. The terms of the compact would not be binding until enough states joined to cast 270 votes necessary to elect a president in the Electoral College.

Proponents of this proposal believe it will allow all citizens to participate in the election process, not just a small group of swing states. As Henrik Hertzberg writes in the March 6, 2006, issue of the *New Yorker*,

As has become increasingly clear over the past few general elections, with their red states and blue states, an American Presidential campaign is no longer truly national. It takes place almost exclusively in the purple states—the "battleground states," where neither party can be sure of a lock. In 2004, there were thirteen such states, accounting for twenty-eight per cent of the population (and thirty-two per cent of the ultimate vote, since turnout increases with the uncertainty of the outcome). In the final month, the candidates spent \$237 million on advertising, \$229 million of it in those thirteen states. (In twenty-three states, they didn't spend a dime.) At the same time, President Bush, Vice-President Cheney, Senator Kerry, and Senator Edwards attended a total of two hundred and ninety-one campaign events. Two hundred and sixty-eight of them were in the lucky thirteen.

To learn more, see the National Popular Vote website, <http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/npv/>.

Membership

Betty Mutran

Dear Members:

Please let us know whether you or someone you know has been a member of the League for fifty years and we have yet to acknowledge you. Please do not be shy on this score. It is a wonderful testament of your commitment. We have no way of knowing when someone becomes a new honorary member other than having someone call it to our attention. The annual dinner is coming soon where we acknowledge the commitment of our fifty year members. Just send an email to lvvodc.membership@earthlink.net.

We will continue to hand distribute membership directories at the March 16th meeting. After that, we will mail those remaining to members who did not receive one.

New Local Members

Anne M. Kissel
19104 Stone Brook
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
919-967-2527 (C)
AnneMKissel@aol.com

Renee Lord
1100 Laurel Springs Drive Apt. 1108
Durham, NC 27713
919-484-7666 (D)
reneelord@nc.rr.com

New National Member

Louise B. Williams
750 Weaver Dairy Road Apt. 239
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-1468

New e-mail

Margie McKinney
mcmck@mindspring.com

WATCH FOR US!

Beverly Hanly

Tune your TV to UNC-TV's Spring Fund Raising Festival on Sunday, March 19th between 3 and 7 p.m. to see your fellow members take calls from donors. You might want to use this opportunity to make a donation yourself.

As of this writing, we have the twenty volunteer members needed but we can have more people, so if you have meant to call but haven't gotten around to it, there's still time. Call me at 542-1867 or email me at bhanly@aol.com.

Report of the Nominating Committee

Judie Burke, Chair

This slate will be presented at the Annual Meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor.

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|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| President | Jan Richmond |
| 1st Vice President | Bessie Carrington |
| 2nd Vice President | Else Bolotin |
| Secretary | Carol Sherrod |
| Treasurer | TBA |
| Nominating Committee | Gay Eddy |
| Director, 2006-2007 | Joyce Colaiace (Program) |
| | Betty Mutran (Membership) |
| | Anne Bodner, Chatham Unit |
| Director, 2006-2007 | Eve Barkley, Voter Services |
| | Cynthia Wertz, Webmistress |
| | Carol Rist, Voter Editor |

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Chatham Counties
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Chapel Hill NC 27515-3397
Tel: 919-419-1650
<http://www.lwvodc.org>

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization for men and women that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen over 18, male or female, may become a voting member of the League. With that membership comes the opportunity to work on local, state, regional, and national program issues.

The Voter is printed on recycled paper.

Election Calendar 2006

Filing	Feb 13—Feb 28
Registration for primary	Closes April 7
One stop voting begins	April 13
One stop voting ends	April 29
Primary election	May 2
2d primary if needed	May 30
Registration for general election	Closes October 13
One stop voting begins	October 19
One stop voting ends	November 4
General election	November 7