

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA

“Educating & Advocating for Democracy”

www.lwvnc.org



NC VOTER

MARCH 2004

A NEW “CHECK-OFF” ON THE N.C. INCOME-TAX FORM *The Public Campaign Financing Fund*

WHAT IS THE CHECK-OFF? ▶▶▶▶▶▶▶▶

North Carolina taxpayers now have an opportunity to designate \$3 to a new Public Campaign Finance Fund. **Marking “Yes” on the check-off will not reduce any refund or increase any taxes owed.** It simply tells the N.C. Revenue Department to send \$3 to the Public Campaign Fund.

WHAT IS THE FUND’S PURPOSE?

Voters elect judges in North Carolina, but too often they know little about the candidates. Judges must be impartial, but most of the donations in judicial elections come from lawyers and litigants who appear in courts. The purpose of the Fund is to increase the information voters have about candidates for the N.C. Court of Appeals and Supreme Court and decrease the importance of large campaign donations in those elections. The Fund enhances fair courts and fair elections.

WHAT DOES THE FUND’S SUPPORT?

The Public Campaign Financing Fund:

- Provides a *Judicial Voter Guide* that describes the functions of the appellate courts and profiles the candidates running for those offices, with biographical information and statements from the candidates. The Guide is prepared and distributed by the State Board of Elections.
- Provides *limited public financing* to candidates for the N.C. Supreme Court and Court of Appeals who accept fund-raising and spending limits. To be eligible for public funds, candidates in the program must get at least 350 small donations from registered voters, reject large donations, and refuse funds from special-interest groups.

WHO OVERSEES THE FUND?

The State Board of Election administers the Fund's operation, with help from a bipartisan Advisory Council chaired by Willis Whichard, Dean of Campbell University's School of Law and a former N.C. Supreme Court

N.C. Public Campaign Financing Fund

This Fund pays for a nonpartisan voter guide and helps fund judicial candidates who accept strict fundraising and spending limits. Do you agree that \$3 should go to this Fund? Filling in a circle below will not increase your tax or reduce your refund.

You

Yes
 No

Your Spouse

Yes
 No

justice. Other Council members are former Supreme Court Justice G.K. Butterfield, former Administrative Office of the Courts Director Tom Ross, Greensboro attorney Bob Hunter, and Lenoir attorney W. Wallace Respass.

WHO ENDORSES THE FUND?

A broad coalition of civic leaders, reformers, legislators, and more than 1,000 judges and leading attorneys organized to win passage of the 2002 Judicial Campaign Reform Act, which created the Public Campaign Fund.

The League of Women Voters, American Bar Association, AARP, National Center for State Courts and many others applaud the new program. So do former governors Jim Hunt (D) and Jim Holshouser (R) and civic leaders like William Friday. Over 70% of N.C. voters say they want more information on judicial candidates and want courts free of bias or political pressure. The new Fund can help – but only if people say “Yes” on the check-off.

For more information, go to www.lwvnc.org or ncjudges.org or call Scott Logan at the State Board of Elections: 919-733-7173.

2004 LWVNC COUNCIL – *You’re invited*

Saturday, June 5th, Holiday Inn SunSpree Resort, Asheville, NC
Arrive on Friday to enjoy the resort facilities, the Arts Walk, fine food in Asheville and the company of League members and friends.

Check out the resort at www.sunspree.com - room rate for that weekend for LWV is \$79 plus tax. That rate will be honored for Thurs, Fri, and Saturday nights. TO GUARANTEE THAT RATE RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY WEDNESDAY, MAY 5TH. Call 800-733-3211 or 828-254-3211. More details soon or contact Mary Klensz, 704-542-9858; klenzm@nationwide.com

THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Another big "Thank You" to our members for your contributions since the Fall 2003 Voter to the LWVNC request for financial support.

John Brett	Sara Hamilton	Andrea Miller
Peg Chapin	Virginia Hamman	Elizabeth Mueller
Carola Cohn	Juanita Harbour	Ellen Olson
Barbara Coulson	Diana Haskell	Betty Rash
Bonnie Covey	Mary Helen Hayman	Mary Rose Raufer
Donna Duke	Eunice Helig	Hildegard Ryals
Gay Eddy	Diane Henderson	Joan Scott
Thereasea Elder	Jean Hinson	Betty Seizinger
Eva Eliel	Susan Jezorek	Anjan Shah
Elizabeth Ellerbee	Claudia Kadis	Theresa Shank
Lee Evans	Lulu Knibbs	Maethel Shindleman
Sonya Friedrich	Marian Lowry	Frances Syptak
Amy Gray	Joan Maki	Katharine Taylor
Mary Ann Gross	Linda McCarley	Melissa Tilley
Sally Gude	Jean McCoy	Eric Vander Elst
Marion Gwyn	Virginia McDermott	Charles West

NOT TO LATE TO SEND YOUR FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO LWVNC

Can you give a little bit extra to the LWVNC? Your help with a financial contribution of \$10, \$25 or more will help make things happen. The support of all our members is important. Think of how much could happen if all our members gave as little as \$10. Please send your check to LWVNC, 3801 Barrett Dr., #204, Raleigh, NC 27609-7214. Checks can be made payable to LWVNC or for a tax deductible contribution checks should be made payable to the CEF (LWVNC 501 (c) (3). For those who have already contributed thank you for your financial support.

LWVNC JOINS NORTH CAROLINA OPEN GOVERNMENT COALITION

Mary Klenz has been invited to represent the LWVNC on the slate for the first board of directors of the NC Open Government Coalition. The Board voted to become a charter member of the organization at the February 21st board meeting after being invited to join as a charter member.

In a letter to interested organizations, the coalition steering committee pointed out that "a variety of forces such as technology, security concerns and an unsettling move toward secrecy have combined to challenge citizen access to government records and meetings." Members of the media, lawyers, civic organizations that have long fought for open government met at Chapel Hill in 2003 to begin to build support for the effort which was inspired by the National Freedom of Information Coalitions and thirty-four state organizations. A steering committee began the process of producing a proposed mission statement, bylaws and leadership structure that will be presented to interested groups at a meeting at Elon University on March 22, 2004.

The Steering committee was made up of representatives from The Charlotte Observer, The News & Observer, WRAL-TV, NC Library Association, the NC Press Foundation and the Associated Press.

The Leagues interest in the coalition is rooted in the LWVUS statement of position on the citizen's right to know/citizen participation as announced by the national board in June 1984 and spelled out in Impact on Issues. "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens at all levels of government. The League further believes that government bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible."

For information contact Mary Klenz, 704-542-9858; klenzm@nationwide.com.

2004 COUNCIL BUDGET COMMITTEE:

The committee, chaired by LWVCM member June Kimmel, and members Patty Dale (MAL) and Jean Hinson (LWV Catawba Valley) met on Saturday, March 6th in Newton, NC to prepare a LWVNC budget for 2004-05. The proposed budget, once it has been approved by the state board, will be presented for approval at the 2004 Council in Asheville on June 5th.

PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION – THE ELECTRONIC GREEN SPACE

By Robert F. Sepe, Ph.D.

Thomas Jefferson once said, "A democracy cannot be both ignorant and free." There is a connection between democracy, free elections and a free and open press. The concentration of media ownership (radio, television, cable TV, newspapers and magazines) diminishes the voices within a community to 'one world view.' The interests of the corporate 'media' owners take precedence over informing the public. In 'Concentration of Media Ownership Is Eroding Our Democracy' Frank A. Blethen, the publisher and CEO of the Seattle Times Co. warns that American democracy is endangered by media conglomerates more interested in short-term profits than news and public service.

"The structure and operation of our system of radio and television broadcasting affects, among other things, the sense of 'community' of listeners and viewers. Recently, governmental programs have been directed toward increasing citizen involvement in community affairs. Cable television has the potential to be a vehicle for much needed community level expression. Local 'community' or public access channels can serve to strengthen the sense of 'community' and facilitate greater communication and awareness of its residents. To this end, Congress voted in 1984 to require cable operators to allocate channels (bandwidth) on their systems on an "as-needed" basis for each distinct community. It allows local governments to require cable operators to provide equipment so that each community can possess the capability to produce television programs for telecast over public access channels.

The purpose of Public Access television is to serve as an information bridge between people within a community. These include production and telecast of community-based programs that residents may wish to prepare and televise. Residents are able to use public access television production equipment to develop programs whose purpose is to serve community needs, heighten local issue awareness, communicate divergent viewpoints regarding religion, politics, taxes, entertainment, public education and other matters of personal interest to other residents of the community.

Because of its local focus, public access channels have the ability to place issues in front of the community, to spark dialogue, and to encourage people to work together to develop solutions to common problems. During the early days of cable television, federal policy makers reasoned that local Access channels could serve as a vehicle to communicate local issues and concerns. *In a sense, a kind of communication green space in the media environment where programs can be guided by values and needs outside the commercial media.* The cable television franchise renewal process is the key that allows local governments to secure Public Access channels and equipment necessary to grow and cultivate this green space. In addition to becoming a valuable public resource, Access facilities often provide technical assistance to community organizations that allows them to serve the community with greater effectiveness.

The laws have changed since this 1970 Federal Communications Commission *Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, issued when cable companies operating in communities were still required to offer community channels, which include "public access" "education access" and "government access" channels in a community in return for the ability to create a defacto monopoly and place its wires in city, county and town roadways.

This practice was reversed in 1984 when the Cable Communications Policy Act removed the assurance of public access channels for communities; now cities are required to cite justification or need for public access channels.

If it is able to document 'need', The 1984 Cable Act empowers local governments to require public access channel to "assure that cable communications to provide the widest possible diversity of information sources and service to the public." But, it is now up to the community to effectively lobby local elected officials to require the cable company to designate cable television channels for public use.

The 1984 Cable Act modified the manner in which public access channels were awarded and funded. Prior to 'The Act,' cable companies were obligated to provide the channels, television production equipment and fund a community public access center. The Act shifted the public access funding to local government and the cable subscriber, a material alteration that was welcomed by local government representatives.

Prior to The Act, local governments were limited to levying a 3% franchise fee on the cable operator's total receipts and all franchise fee revenues were earmarked for regulatory oversight of the cable operator and supporting the public access activities in excess of the cable operator's contribution. If the revenue pursuant to the 3% fee was insufficient for these purposes, each city could petition the FCC to increase the levy to 5%.

Local governments, pressured by budget deficits related to the poor economic climate of the 1980s, desired to divert cable television franchise fee revenues to the general fund so they could be used to meet daily operating expenses. Consequently, as part of The Act's deregulation aura, an agreement was forged between the local governments and the cable television industry. The Cable Industry agreed not to oppose lifting the restriction on the use of cable television franchise fee revenues by local governments in exchange for relief from the requirement to: i) Provide public access channels at the request of the local government, ii) Fund public access operating expenses and iii) Equip public access television studios. The unstated but agreed upon principal between the parties was that, if a local government could justify the need for public access channels, it became the responsibility of the local government to use franchise fees to fund public access operations.

The problem is that the elected officials who agreed to this scheme in 1984 have retired from public life; however, the Cable Industry's institutional memory regarding this trade-off remains un-muted. During this unprecedented era of media consolidation and 'one voice' concerned citizens recognize that public access community television is an extension of our Constitutional right to free expression as guaranteed by the First Amendment. Likewise, these citizens pressure local officials to require cable operators to designate public access electronic green space for public access channels and to fund the operation therein to establish forum for community voices.

Local governments are often willing to acquiesce to the demand by citizens for public access channels and direct the cable company to designate channels for public use, but want the cable operator to fund the equipment and operating expense as well. When this requirement is discussed during franchise renewal negotiations, cable operators advise that their predecessors bargained away this right and "it is their responsibility to use franchise fees to fund the operation of public access television."

Although I've presented the essential elements of the story, it is by no means complete. However, what is at stake is the future of our Republic and the ability to designate 'electronic green space- public cable channels' for 'fair and balanced' use by community residents who desire to use this community free expression forum to create dialog, challenge assertions reported by corporate media, dissipate cultural and economic barriers, and facilitate communication among and between divergent groups within the community. Public access channels, the electronic green space for public/community, education and government access television must be preserved and included in every franchise agreement issued by a local government as a way to balance national and local voices and create dialog and unity within our communities.

An often-asked question by government officials is, "What is the worst possible thing that could happen if we establish and fund public access channels in our community?" My response is always the same, "the worst possible thing is that you'll have to deal with an informed electorate."

LWV Check it out, check if off campaign on NPR

You may have heard the Leagues message about the 2004 checkoff on your 2003 state income tax form on NPR stations across North Carolina. The League's action on this issue has been well documented in the Voter, local newspapers, television and radio talk shows, and the General Assembly. Now the time has come to educate the public to take action when they file the NC income tax returns. Funding for the radio campaign was made possible by the Open Society Foundation through the LWVUS Education Fund.

Judicial Independence

By Fran Syptak
LWV of Catawba Valley

For several years now, under the leadership of Eva Rogers, the Board of LWVNC has focused on judicial independence as an issue that is vital to our democracy, and the passage of the Judicial Campaign Reform Act stands as testimony to our commitment to a fair and impartial judiciary. But we have only begun to consider the work that needs to be done to ensure that these essential values – fairness and impartiality – are the heart and driving force of our court system.

Now that Eva has found it necessary to resign from the Board and her position as Judicial Independence Project Leader, I am both honored and humbled to do my best to nurture and build upon the judicial independence programs that Eva worked so hard for, and to take the crucial next steps toward a truly independent judiciary in our State and in our nation.

Eva, realizing that educating the public (as well as LWV members!) about the way our court system works was the obvious place to start, initiated a three-part Civics 101 program which the Wilmington League has just piloted. After review and revision, plans are to offer the program to Leagues throughout the State. Another recent educational event was a Judicial Forum in Chapel Hill sponsored by AAUW of NC, Democracy NC and NC Women United. An impressive array of panelists spoke about both the federal and NC judicial systems. In this election year, however, the priority of our local Leagues will be to help judicial candidates to get their messages out to the voters.

As the LWVNC Judicial Independence Project leader, I volunteer to be the contact point for Leagues who want to organize programs or to share useful information with other leagues. I can be reached by phone at 828-328-4591 or by e-mail at fsyptak@charter.net.

ENDOWMENT CONTRIBUTORS

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

We acknowledge with grateful appreciation the contributions made to the Citizen Education Foundation Endowment Fund during the year 2003. A complete list of all 2003 contributors is as follows:

DONORS (up to \$99)

Diane Brown (Orange/Durham/Chatham)
 Donna Duke (Watauga)
 Mary Ann Gross (ODC)
 Billie Hayward (ODC)
 Alma McKee (Henderson)
 Andrea Miller (ODC)
 Gayle Mitchner (Cartaret)
 Barbara Nettesheim (ODC)

SPONSORS (\$100 - \$499)

Jana Albritton (New Hanover)
 Margaret Brown (ODC)
 Patty Dale (MAL, Watauga)
 Diane Henderson (ODC)
 Kay Hodge (Moore)
 Bev Kawalec (ODC)
 June Kimmel (Charlotte Mecklenburg)
 Marian Lowry (Henderson)
 Diana Phillips (ODC)

BENEFACTORS (\$1000 and over)

Ruth Mary Meyer (Past State President)
 O.B. and Elizabeth L. Falls Foundation

We regret if we have in error omitted any names. If this has happened, please call the League office (800) 851-VOTE to let us know.

ENDOWMENT CONTRIBUTIONS IN MEMORY AND IN HONOR OF OUR LEAGUERS

A contribution in memory of Frances Schneider was given by Marian Lowry (LWV-Henderson County). Fran was a long-time Leaguer who was an activist, not only in the League, but in many other organizations in her community. She took it as her responsibility to help those less fortunate than she, and she worked tirelessly in that endeavor. Fran was also a charter contributor to the Endowment.

A contribution in honor of Martha B. DeVos (Moore County) was given by Kay Hodge (LWV-Moore County). Martha has been the League mentor of Kay and of so many others. Mentors are important to all of us new to the ways of government, and a good mentor like Martha makes all the difference in how effective Leaguers can be when they approach elected officials and speak at hearings and meetings.

A contribution in honor of Margaret Holton of Orange County was given by Diana Phillips (LWV-Orange/Durham/Chatham Counties). For many years and spanning decades, Margaret went to Raleigh to lobby members of the Legislature two and three times a week during sessions. Margaret's focus has been the environment and children and the family. She has chaired committees on children and the family, and her articles on the environment have been a staple of local and state "Voters". Margaret was also a charter contributor to the Endowment.

A contribution in honor of Phyllis Rogers of Henderson County was given by Diana Phillips. Phyllis has been one of our League's most stalwart proponents of Clean Elections. In addition to working in her local League to organize programs and workshops, she has driven many times from the mountains to Raleigh to attend meetings and lobby legislators about reducing the power of money in elections. Phyllis was also a charter contributor to the Endowment.

VOTER EDUCATION COMMUNITY MEETINGS SPONSORED BY THE LEAGUE AND THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Local Leagues are beginning the planning for a series of community meetings to educate voters on the nuts and bolts of voting. As reported in previous Voters, the LWVNC Election Reform Team met with twenty-two directors of local elections across North Carolina in 2003. Based on their concerns, League experience working elections in their own communities and talking to voters the team proposed working with the SBOE on providing basic voter information to the public. Much of the public does not have the most basic information on how to register to vote, where to vote and what their rights are and the candidates running for office. Directors felt that they could address concerns and issues once the voters arrive at their polling place but getting them the information they need to show up at the polls was not obvious to many voters.

Formats for the meetings will take place in communities across North Carolina and will be worked out by local Leagues and other community leaders. The SBOE will provide materials and information for the programs. Many Leagues are in the planning process at this time. For more information on how to participate please contact Mary Klentz, klenz@nationwide.com; 704-542-5012. The Leagues partnership with the SBOE was suggested by state director Gary Bartlett when he addressed the 2001 state convention.

NEWS RELEASE

In the fall of 2004, the Carteret County League of Women Voters as well as the North Carolina and National Leagues will partner with Carteret Community College in sponsoring forums for statewide judicial candidates. The North Carolina Bar Foundation was granted \$25,000 in support of this groundbreaking League of Women Voters voter education project. The interactive forums for candidates in state Supreme and Appellate Court seats will broadcast "live" over the Internet. Voters can attend the forums at the community college or by logging on to the League's www.beforyouvote.us website to watch the forums on a computer and email questions. "This is really an important project for the League and all those who are concerned about informing voters," said Connie Asero/President of the League of Women Voters of Carteret County, "We believe the Internet will provide a rare opportunity for a statewide audience to question the candidates. As far as we know, this will be the first use of the Internet for judicial candidate forums, maybe for any candidate forums. We are very appreciative of the Bar Foundation's support."

In a similar project last year, the League web cast a panel discussion, "The Influence of the Media on Elections." Almost 600 people attended the forums either in Joslyn Hall or by logging on to the Internet from home computers, classrooms, at the N.C. Bar Association, the N.C. State Board of Elections, and the League's national headquarters in Washington, DC. "We consider our first web cast to be a big success and will now use the Internet to deliver real time candidate forums to a statewide, even worldwide audience," continued Ms. Asero, "All interested voters, even our troops stationed overseas, will be able to attend the same forum and send questions for the candidates."

In a recent poll by the NC Center for Voter Education, 57% of the voters responding said they lacked important information about judicial candidates before voting. The League's goal for the 2004 project is to use the immediacy and interactive capabilities of "live" web casts to increase the number of voters who can hear and see what the judges have to say. The web cast will also be archived on the www.beforyouvote.us website and keyed to specific questions so voters can continue to research the candidates right up to the elections.

For the 2004 judicial candidate web cast, the Carteret and North Carolina Leagues will again join with project co-sponsors such as Carteret Community College, the Open Society Institute, the North Carolina Center for Voter Education, and Democracy North Carolina to encourage participatory democracy with information technology. "The North Carolina Bar Association's contribution to the planned web cast is important for helping to draw attention to a very significant voter education event," said Ms. Asero.

DNET UPDATE

Cooperation with LWVUS is continuing on Democracy NET (DNET) for the 2004 elections. DNET provides voters information about candidates and elections in all 50 states. This year LWVUS is partnering with Capitol Advantage to make DNET accessible from many of the major media portals on the Internet including Yahoo, MSN, AOL, USA Today and the New York Times. It will be a link on all of their homepages. To see a preliminary version of DNET click on www.congress.org.

North Carolina will cover Congressional elections (Senate and House). We will also link Judicial elections to the State League's website. Local Leagues will also be able to link local elections to DNET through their own websites.

Katarina Moyon (Charlotte-Mecklenburg) has finalized state coordinator training and is looking for volunteers from around the state to help gather information for the state congressional elections. If interested please contact: Katarina Moyon at Katarinal@earthlink.net or 980-253-7977.

March for Women's Lives

Sunday April 25, 2004

Washington, DC

Contact Diana Onken, donken@lww.org; 202-263-1328

LWV toolkit available in the member's only section at www.lww.org

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MID YEAR UPDATE
 By Billie Hayward
 Membership/Leadership State Board Liaison to Local Leagues

As you know from reading a previous issue of the Voter, the Membership Development goal for 2003-2005 set by the State Board was 5% increase by June 2004. Representatives from 14 of the 17 local Leagues in the state attended a Membership Growth Workshop at Convention, 2003. Each participant left the workshop with a plan and strategies for increasing membership in their local Leagues. In early February, the Presidents of each League were contacted and asked to provide an update on membership growth. Of the 11 Leagues who responded, 9 Leagues reported a total gain of 93 new members while 2 Leagues reported total loss of 20 members for a net growth of 73 members. After the other six Leagues respond, a final count will be sent to all Presidents and Membership Chairs by e-mail. Refer to the LWVNC Membership Growth Chart elsewhere in this Voter for information about specific growth for each League.

Those Leagues who have experienced growth were successful in adapting the ideas presented at the workshop to their individual circumstances. The Boards worked together as a team to achieve or exceed their goals. A variety of successful approaches were described as follows:

Kadra Bradford and Joan Liston, Co-Presidents, and Pat Hayward, Membership Chair, provided leadership that led to a 48.8% increase in membership in **Dare County**. They used a combination of seven strategies to exceed their new member goal for the year. These included: luncheon open to public honoring elected women in the county with follow-up letter inviting them to join the League; three letters of invitations to join sent by each Board member; media publicity; and "inviting everyone we met to join our League." Of the 21 new members, six are men and three are elected women with high visibility in the community.

DeDe Carney, President, and Amina Shahim-El, Membership Chair, led the **Pitt County** Board in achieving a 46.4% increase in membership by asking everyone they met to join. The direct and personal approach worked well for them also and they are busy engaging the 26 new members in League activities and events.

Fran Syptak, President and Jean Hinson, Treasurer and Membership Chair of the **Catawba Valley LWV** managed to help their League increase membership by 40%. Concurrently, they were working with **Emily Williamson** expanding the representation of their new regional League to include three counties. This team wrote personal letters to people in the community inviting them to join the League. After the first annual meeting in May, they will begin to officially recruit in other counties.

The **New Hanover League** has recruited 15 new members to date this year for an 11.5 % increase over June 2003. The approach designed by **Audrey Albrecht and Carole Ellis, Co Presidents**, was unique and effective in achieving diversity. Target groups for recruitment included people under fifty, men, minorities and business people. A membership invitation letter was sent to 60 prospects provided by the Board with good results. These efforts resulted in the following categories of new members: six men, four minority members and nine under 50 years old.

Ann Torok, Moore County Membership Chair, reports a 10.7 % increase in membership to date. Civics 101 has been a recruiting tool for new members, as have letters to prospective members suggested by other Leaguers, media coverage of meetings and activities in the local paper, and inviting a non-member to a League luncheon.

Nelda Holder, President, and June Christie, Membership Chair, of the **Asheville-Buncombe LWV** have provided the leadership needed for their League to continue growing at a steady pace following the trend set over the past three years. Membership is up 6.9% so far this year with 10 new members and still recruiting.

Orange, Durham, and Chatham League under the capable leadership of **Judie Burke, President, and June Talvitie-Siple, Membership Chair**, has also maintained a pattern of steady growth again this year with 10 new members, which is an increase of 4.6%.

Finally, **Charlotte-Mecklenburg League Membership Chair, Diane Schneider, and Co-Presidents, Lucille Howard and Beth Springston** have worked with their Board to achieve a 2.5% increase in membership.

Congratulations to every member of North Carolina Leagues in making sure the League continues to grow. Your successes are inspiring and the State Board appreciates all you are doing to make democracy better in our State.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY!

By Diana Phillips
Chair, Endowment Fund

Where there's a will, there's a way to ensure the work of the League goes on after us! In 2001 our State League established an Endowment Fund for the Citizen Education Foundation (CEF), the LWV-NC name for the Education Fund. The CEF is a 501.c.3 organization, and all contributions are tax deductible. At the end of 2003 the Fund contained \$21,009, and interest from the Fund went to the Foundation to use in educational projects of the League.

Planned giving is an important tool for any organization that looks to the future. As the saying goes, only two things are certain: death and taxes. Fortunately we can plan for them both! To name a few ways, we can make the CEF Endowment a beneficiary in an annuity or life insurance policy, we can leave a legacy to the Endowment in a will, and we can make the Endowment a beneficiary in a charitable remainder trust.

For more information, call the League office (800) 851-VOTE or Diana Phillips (919) 732-3561. Leave a short message on either machine, and we will call you back.

The EIN for the CEF Endowment is 58-1553354.

Board Brief from 10/18/2003 Meeting in Raleigh

By Lee Evans, Secretary

Did you remember to respond to the Fund Raising Letter sent by the State Board?? It's not too late to do so. These funds keep up our connection with YOU!

Orientation of new board members. Needed: Non-partisan & Ethics Policies.

Endowment plan strategies to increase our efforts for long-term fiscal stability

Death Penalty Moratorium of Wake County League affirmed as consistent with the position on Equal Protection of the State and National Leagues.

Marketing Report from 9/25/03 was distributed and on February 21 Board agenda

Newsletter mailings considered to Libraries. Alternate suggestion: information poster. Follow up in February. *Who should receive the Voter?* Develop policy. Consider a Board Public Relations portfolio.

LWV of Catawba Valley is the new name of previously Catawba County LWV

State Board of Electors/LWVNC partnering for community forums on voter education this spring. *Liaisons in local leagues are needed.*

Date Council: save the date..... June 5th in Asheville.

Board Briefs from 2/21/04 in Raleigh

Accepted: a Non-Partisan Policy for State Board Members

Budget for 2005 will be prepared by committee beginning in March

April 3rd next Board Meeting

Council in Asheville – June 5-6 – lots of workshops. Shall we have a silent auction?

Membership – Billie Hayward reported many leagues have increased their numbers. Is YOUR report? Mary Alice Underhill has developed a resource tool for membership based on Billie's workshop.

Carteret County League will receive a grant of \$1000 from State League for their pioneer effort in Judicial Reform. They are required to give more detailed plans for the second part of their project with evaluation of success/failure of the project "in line with the stated goals".

Citizen Education Foundation deliberated hard on the Marketing Report mentioned last time and thorough proposals by Diane Phillips for proceeding with the Endowment Fund campaign. Board Members pledged to secure 100% participation of Board Members. The Endowment Governance Document was reviewed and action delayed for time to digest the recommendations and detailed organizational structure proposed.

Summary prepared by State Secretary Lee Mahan Evans, LWV Moore County.

League of Women Voters of Craven County

The League of Women Voters of Craven County held a public organizational meeting on November 20, 2003 to discuss the role of the League in our community and to make plans for the future. The League is presently being run by a Steering Committee of 14 members who have been meeting in January and February and reviewing the League's by-laws and committee structure and working on the recruitment of new members and building public awareness of the League. They have also been preparing for the League's Annual Meeting to be held on Thursday, May 13, 2004 at 7:00 PM at the New Bern Library. New Officers will be elected at that meeting, and the guest speakers will be Tiffiney E. Miller, the Director of Elections for Craven, and Owen D. Andrews, of PrintElect, a company located in New Bern, that sells elections equipment and services from Maine to Florida. Plans are also being made for having a Voters Guide for the 2004 elections and for conducting a Candidate Forum in October 2004.

The Steering Committee members are: Rita Alicandro, Pat Kuntz, Gail Austin, Pam Michel, Earlene Coward, Doris Pade, Suzy Edington, Marion Peterson, Mary Carter Guion, Mary Peterson, Mary Ann Harrison, Barbara Putnam, Gloria Kneen, June Yates.

Thank you to Alice Graham Underwood for her work in putting this together.

LWVNC MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

LEAGUE NAME	June 2003	Feb 2004	NEW MEMBERS
LWV Asheville-Buncombe	143	153	10
LWV Cartaret County	76	?	?
LWV Catawba Valley	20	28	8
LWV Craven County	20	20	0
LWV Charlotte-Mecklenburg	121	124	3
LWV Dare County	43	64	21
LWV Henderson County	78	?	?
LWV Macon County	54	?	?
LWV Madison County	57	?	?
LWV Moore County	84	93	9
LWV New Hanover County	52	58	6
LWV Onslow/Coastal Pender	14	?	?
LWV Orange/Durham/Chatham	215	225	10
LWV Piedmont Triad	97	80	-17
LWV Pitt County	56	82	26
LWV Union County	20	17	-3
LWV Wake County	147	?	?

Issue Briefs**The Features of a Stand-By-Your-Ad Campaign**

Stand-by-your-ad proposals can be either voluntary or mandatory, and they can call for varying levels of accountability and disclosure. The 1996 Minnesota Compact asked candidates voluntarily to agree that “in television advertising, either the candidate’s visual likeness, voice, or both will be in the ad at least 50% of the time.”

Legislation introduced in the North Carolina legislature and the U.S. Congress in 1997, known as the Stand By Your Ad bill, included the following provisions for television ads:

- A requirement that the candidate appear full screen to state a disclaimer, or that a full-screen photo of the candidate is shown during the voiceover of the disclaimer.
- A requirement that a printed disclaimer of a specified minimum size appear in the lower third of the screen. The disclaimer would identify the name of the sponsoring candidate committee.
- A requirement that the candidate state, “I am (or This is) (candidate’s name), candidate for (name of office) and I (or my campaign) sponsored this ad.”

In addition, the bills required candidates to state the disclaimer in radio ads. A print disclaimer would state who paid for the ad, the name of the candidate the ad supports or opposes, and whether or not the ad was authorized by a candidate. The bills contained minimum size requirements to ensure that the disclaimer is not in fine print. The bills included similar requirements for PACs and party organizations and levied civil penalties for non-compliance.

The North Carolina bill only made it through one chamber, and the federal bill never made it out of committee. Even so, similar provisions could be made part of a voluntary effort to have candidates stand by their ads.* Candidates can also make more general promises to stand by their ads. The League of Women Voters, for instance, has called on candidates to “condemn the use of campaign material of any sort that distorts, misrepresents, or otherwise falsifies the facts regarding any candidate.” The Institute for Global Ethics likewise asked candidates in Maine in 1996 to pledge to “avoid demeaning references...and demeaning visual images of [their] opponent[s].”

Do Stand-by-Your-Ad Campaigns Work?

Although candidates applauded the 1996 Minnesota Compact and its goals, a study by the Annenberg Public Policy Center suggests that Minnesota voters perceived a high level of negative advertising that year, especially in ads aired by Senate challenger Rudy Boschwitz and the National Republican Senatorial Committee on Boschwitz’s behalf. Polling data also suggests the attack ads may have backfired, contributing to Sen. Paul Wellstone’s relatively comfortable re-election victory. The Annenburg study could not conclusively state whether the voter’s response was due to their exposure to stand-by-your-ad campaign. However, the study does suggest that voters are “fed up” with attack ads. Surveys also show that voters had a positive reaction to free television spots in the 1997 New Jersey gubernatorial race in which the candidates spoke directly to the camera. The spots were issue-oriented and contained fewer attacks than candidate ads. The efforts in New Jersey and Minnesota to set higher standards of accountability demonstrate that it may be possible to induce candidates and their consultants to reconsider the perceived advantages of going negative.

* There are tax and other legal ramifications when nonprofit organizations ask candidates to sign on to codes of conduct. For more information on the limits of the law, please contact the Alliance for Better Campaigns.

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