



# NC VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
*EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR DEMOCRACY*

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Judie Burke and LWVUS'  
Elisabaeth MacNamara



## THIRTIETH BIENNIAL CONVENTION A "ROARING" SUCCESS

Judie Burke

Little River Golf Resort in Carthage (Moore County) was the perfect setting for a weekend packed with information, interaction, food and fun. Starting on Friday afternoon, members and moderators exchanged ideas at workshops on the use of technology, membership growth, voter services and effective advocacy, followed by a dine around at local restaurants ably hosted by Moore County Leaguers. Evening presentations on the ERA and "Running and Winning" attracted an enthusiastic late night crowd.

The Saturday morning business meeting was attended by delegates from eleven Leagues and one MAL. Following a welcome by Carthage Mayor William Walton, the meeting was a fine example of the League in action, with motions, amendments and amendments to amendments during the presentation of the budget. The focus at lunch was the parade of local Leagues, with each highlighting its year's accomplishments, no two alike.

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Speakers throughout the day informed us about a range of topics of interest to the membership, and are described elsewhere in the VOTER. Most gratifying was the willingness of each speaker to spend a beautiful Saturday afternoon with the League and sharing her/his expertise. To a person, conventioners would have liked more time with each of them. An added attraction to the full program was our LWVUS liaison Elisabeth MacNamara, and LWVUS staffer Jeanette Senecal updating us on DC Voting Rights.

Secretary of State Elaine Marshall was our banquet speaker, and she did a fine job of demystifying the new lobby and ethics laws, after which she and her husband stayed for the Henderson League Flappers' entertainment featuring satirical songs and humor about the history of the League. It was a fitting capstone to a long and full day.

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Everyone was back for more on Sunday morning for roundtables that brought together those interested in fundraising, membership, newsletters, more technology tips and the Lobby Corps. And the conclusion of the business meeting went smoothly with the passage of the program, budget and slate of officers.

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Special recognition is accorded to the host league, Moore County, and its president, Jo Nicholas, and State Board members Brenda Rogers and Sandra Wright for the success of this well coordinated weekend. For those unable to attend – put the next Convention on your calendar as a priority.



**EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGIES FOR THE LEAGUE**

Beverly Hanly

State Representative Deborah Ross (Wake), left, advised attendees at the Convention on tactics for effective advocacy with the state legislators.

It's most important to know what's going on; know the details of what's going on; understand who the stakeholders are. Then arrange to meet with your legislator(s) in the home district or in Raleigh. Make it clear to the legislator who you are and your address; what organization you represent, i.e., the League, and how many citizens that includes. Explain your position and have it available on one sheet of paper to

leave with your legislator.

If you can't meet, call. If you can't call, write; or as a last resort, send an email. Be clear that you live in the person's district. Follow up on the bill and, importantly, thank the legislator in person or send a note to say "... I noticed you ..."

**ADVOCATE!**

Barbara Barnett



At the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention our founding sisters courageously adopted a Declaration of Sentiments and exercised their inalienable rights to participate in the democratic process. The League of Women Voters has carried out the political tradition of non-partisan advocacy. At the LWVNC 2007 Convention workshop Paula Wolf, our new lobbyist, left, gave an outstanding presentation with guidelines for meeting, calling and writing your representatives. An effective advocate will employ the following approach.

1. Be specific, include the Bill number, Name, what it does, and that you support it and why.
2. Stick with one issue.
3. Work the Committees.
4. Take field trips.
5. Position statement on one page only.
6. Do your homework and know your stuff; know your opponents' stuff, know your legislator.
7. There is power in numbers.
8. Coalitions work.
9. Be polite and respectful.
10. Visit in person and ask for their vote.
11. Meet with the opposition to see if there is a possible compromise.
12. How much does it cost, what are other states doing?
13. Thank them, praise them, give awards.
14. Get good press.
15. Meet them in the District.

## WHY WE NEED THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Kathleen Balogh

# 4ERA

At our recent 2007 LWVNC Convention, following a viewing of a DVD on the ERA and a rousing discussion of both past and present ERA activities, delegates agreed that the LWVNC should take an active part in reviving ratification efforts in the NC House and Senate. Directions to the Board during Sunday's closing Plenary included two directives. The Board should begin efforts to identify organizations or groups actively working on the ratification of the ERA in North Carolina, and to enter into collaboration with them where appropriate. And if no active groups are identified, the LWVNC Board should begin this work through the LWVNC membership.

Since 1954 the LWVUS has supported the ERA. In May 1972, only weeks after congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, delegates to the League's national convention overwhelmingly approved support of "equal rights for all regardless of sex" as a necessary extension of the League's long-term support for equal opportunity for all. At the same convention, delegates voted to support the ERA as one of the major ways to take action in support of the equal rights positions. With this decisive action, the League—a direct descendant of the original women's movement—came full circle, to give priority support again to equal rights for women and men.

**We need the ERA** because we do not have it yet. Even in the 21st century, the U.S. Constitution still does not explicitly guarantee that all of the rights it protects are held equally by all citizens without regard to sex. The first – and still the only – right that the Constitution specifically affirms as equal for women and men is the right to vote.

**We need the ERA** because the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause has never been interpreted to grant equal rights on the basis of sex in the same way that the Equal Rights Amendment would. The 14th Amendment has been applied to sex discrimination only since 1971, and the Supreme Court's latest decision on that issue in 1996 does not move us beyond the traditional assumption that males hold rights and females must prove that they hold them.

**We need the ERA** because until we have it, women will have to continue to fight long, expensive, and difficult political and judicial battles to ensure that their rights are constitutionally equal to the rights automatically granted to males on the basis of sex. And in a few cases, men will have to do the same to ensure that they have equal rights with females (usually in areas of family law).

**We need the ERA** because we need its protection against a rollback of the significant advances in women's rights over the past 50 years. Congress has the power to replace existing laws by a majority vote, and even judicial precedents can be eroded or ignored by reactionary courts responding to a conservative political agenda. With an ERA in place, progress already made in eliminating sex discrimination would be much harder to reverse.

**We need the ERA** because we need a clearer and stricter federal judicial standard for deciding cases of sex discrimination. Lower-court decisions in the various circuits and states (some with state ERA's and some without) still reflect confusion and inconsistency about how to deal with sex discrimination claims. Sex discrimination should get the same judicial scrutiny as race discrimination.

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Jo Nicholas, President of Moore County League, left, welcomes the assembled members

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**We need the ERA** because we need to improve the standing of the United States globally with respect to equal justice under law. The governing documents of many other countries specifically affirm legal equality of the sexes (however less than perfect that ideal may be implemented). Ironically, some of those constitutions – for example, in Japan and Iraq – were written under the direction of the United States. Our image is also tarnished by the fact that the Senate has still not ratified CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women).

**We need the ERA** because we need to move beyond the struggle for it. We need to free the energies of the women and men who have spent countless hours, years, and even lifetimes working for this basic human right of equal constitutional protection. When we can redirect that energy and those resources to work on the many other challenges we face in common, we will truly have fulfilled the vision of suffragist leader and ERA author Alice Paul.

Portions of this article are copied from the Impact on Issues, Guide to Public Policy LWV US 2004-06 and from the website: [www.equalrightsamendment.org](http://www.equalrightsamendment.org)

**THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT SAYS:**

**SECTION 1. EQUALITY OF RIGHTS UNDER THE LAW SHALL NOT BE DENIED OR ABRIDGED BY THE UNITED STATES OR BY ANY STATE ON ACCOUNT OF SEX.**

**SECTION 2. THE CONGRESS SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO ENFORCE, BY APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION, THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE.**

**SECTION 3. THIS AMENDMENT SHALL TAKE EFFECT TWO YEARS AFTER THE DATE OF RATIFICATION.**

NC VOTER SPRING, 2007

**RUNNING AND WINNING**

Diana Haskell

In the fall of 2007 the League of Wake County in conjunction with a coalition of like-minded organizations, including the NC Center for Women in Public Service and Peace College, will be presenting a Running and Winning workshop to introduce young women, aged 18-21, to learning about voting issues, to join in the electoral process by voting and participating in political campaigns, and ultimately to consider running for elected office. Based on successful programs in Camden County, New Jersey and Greater Tucson, Arizona, this one-day workshop boosts civic knowledge and focuses on the elective process. Young women are trained to listen, think, vote, campaign and run. Initially they have an opportunity to meet and interact with elected female officials, usually asking questions about how, why and how much it costs to run for office.

Then, teams of five engage in energized discussions on an issue of the day and select a candidate for the U.S. Senate. In addition to an adult facilitator, each team is composed of a candidate chosen by the group plus a speechwriter, a publicist and a campaign manager. The goal-oriented cooperative effort culminates in a mock campaign with effective presentations before the other groups. While no election takes place, each team has the opportunity to work together as the facilitator boosts the self-confidence of each participant. The program is nonpartisan and highly motivating.

In addition, we will conduct follow-up surveys of participants in the program to see if the positive attitudes fostered by the program continue over time. We will also track the political involvement of our participants to determine if their civic engagement activities (such as working on a campaign, donating money to candidates, serving on a board or commission, or actually running for office) are higher than the norms for young women nationally.



## REDISTRICTING, 2010

Audrey Albrecht

Part of LWV-NC Program for 2005-07 (and again for the coming two years) is *“to support legislative efforts to make the redistricting process more equitable by establishing an independent agency to be responsible for periodic reapportionment and redistricting.”* Invited to discuss the issue were Theodore Arrington, UNC-Charlotte Chair of Political Science, and Gerry Cohen, Director of the Bill Drafting Division for the NC Legislature.



Arrington, above left, described the various state and federal laws and legal decisions that had affected redistricting in North Carolina and pointed out the difficulty in developing “fair” voting districts, protecting minorities while representing the population. He was not concerned about political people taking part in redistricting or operating on a political basis as long as the political parties were equitably represented on such a commission or body. He argued that an “independent” non-political committee of some sort was unlikely to be interested enough in the outcome to study the issues and the background as carefully as would those who had been in politics. The most educated in the process and finer points will be those who have the greatest stake in the process. He said “fair” redistricting is NOT simply slicing up the state and calling the slices districts; many historical, natural and social

barriers will prevent the slices from being equitable.

Cohen above, also questioned the value of an independent commission for redistricting. He noted that many have blamed the declining lack of competition in state politics on the effects of partisan or bipartisan gerrymandering. He suggested other reasons for the declining competition for seats:

- A freeze on legislative pay that has lasted for twelve years.
- Lengthy legislative sessions, up to 317 calendar days.
- Increasing campaign expenses with Senate campaigns as high as \$242,000 and House campaigns over \$200,000. (One might easily agree with the frequently heard comment that only the rich can run for the state legislature.)
- Restrictive ballot access rules, which left just two parties on the ballot in 2006.

Cohen also wondered if an independent commission might become an elite group which leaves the rank and file out anyway, hardly the point.

Given these considerations, LWV-NC might want to reconsider an independent commission as the solution to equitable redistricting. ***Editor’s Note: The bill numbers are: H76, H149 and S1093, S1122***



## THE ENDOWMENT DEVELOPMENT FUND & LEAGUE SUPPORT: WHERE ARE WE?

Lee Mahan Evans

A spirited NC League Convention adjourned March 25. Seasoned Leaguers and newly formed Currituck County League attendees had absorbed information and exercised their need to know.

If you have been a contributor to the Endowment Development Fund (EDF), we thank you for sharing in that “dream”. The League is now ready to engage with a foundation to help us manage our portfolio. Having grown the fund to close to \$50,000 (when current pledges are fulfilled), we launch a new phase, with profound THANKS to Betty Ellerbee for her faithful stewardship of this additional responsibility as Treasurer. Our goal of reaching \$100,000 by 2008 is still make-able!

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My term on the Board ends in June. I am grateful for your support and the opportunity yo meet many of you. As a member of the Legacy Circle having written a gift to the LWVNC into my will, and planning to also fulfill my pledge as a Pace Setter, I urge you to share your assets with League, as well as your ideas and energies in programming. The work of the League is important and your contribution to the EDF can help to ensure that the work of the League at the state and the local level will continue. Perhaps you have already planned such a gift. Do let us know as we want your gift to be recognized.

**GETTING N.C. TAXES ON TARGET**  
**Beverly Hanly and Mary Klenz**



In the years of the Great Depression, North Carolina led the nation in the number of bankruptcies and according to the state constitution of the day, "...civilized and Christian citizens" needed protection and relief from the high property taxes. Dan Gerlach, Governor Easley's Chief Budget Advisor, left, explained that to answer their demands, the state took control of the schools, roads, pensions, etc. relieving the local governments of those obligations and thereby lowering their income tax rates. Help for the poor was based on the Elizabethan model: personal judgments at the local level of who was deserving of help. The 1960's changed that approach to one of entitlements.



Governor Easley, among other leaders and advocates, wants to review and modernize the current North Carolina state and local governments split. The intention is to keep any tax changes "revenue neutral" but fair and more widely based.

Sabra Faires, Senate Tax Counsel, left, said a changed tax system needs to be fair, needs to produce revenue sufficient for good government, and to be broad based with low rates. Some would like also to have taxes that influence social policy and change, e.g. taxes on tobacco products.

The State and Local Fiscal Modernization Commission was appointed to examine all aspects of the "modernization" effort. The Commission focused its work on several broad structural changes:

- Broadening the tax base and lowering the tax rate
- Using adjusted gross income instead of the federal taxable income as the starting point for North Carolina tax calculations.
- Reducing the top marginal individual tax rate
- Reducing the number of low income tax payers
- Switching to unitary taxation of corporations doing business in multiple states.
- Looking at changes in the relationship between local and state government to allow local governments more taxing options.

The Commission broke into five subcommittees; income tax, sales tax, local tax, infrastructure, and program responsibilities. The subcommittees met over a period of four months to examine the five main focus areas and reported back with recommendations to the full Commission in late April. Reports are available on the General Assembly website [www.ncga.state.nc.gov](http://www.ncga.state.nc.gov).

Dan Gerlach recommended that the LWV observe the Commission meetings, speak out on Commission recommendations and keep the state and local LWV boards up to date on developments.

**Editor's Note: Mary Klenz has formed a committee to follow the work of the Commission. If you are interested in joining their important work, contact Mary at [klenzm@bellsouth.net](mailto:klenzm@bellsouth.net)**

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## ELECTION AND CAMPAIGN REFORM – THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE UGLY

Louise Romanov

Glenda Clendenin, Director of the Moore County Board of Elections, left, spoke of the impact of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the NC State Board of Elections requirements for standardized voting equipment, ballots, and associated procedures on the last election. Local Boards of Elections used HAVA money and lots of effort to meet these requirements. The NC Board of Elections is also developing a ballot to be used on election day to eliminate the need for expensive (and with lower turnout) runoff elections where they are required. ***Editor's Note: This is often referred to as Instant Run-Off Elections and has been successfully used in some states already.*** The ballot allows for 2nd and 3rd choice votes, so the ballots of those who voted for neither of the top 2 candidates are counted if their 2nd choice (or 3rd if necessary) is for either of the top 2. She also spoke about the implementation of same-day-registration at one-stop voting sites up to 3 days before an election *if that legislation passes*. ***Editor's Note: HB91 was passed by the House; the corresponding bill has not been passed by the Senate.***



Molly Beacham, left middle, of Democracy NC and a League member, spoke of the success of the public funding program for judicial races, asking us to distribute the reminders about the \$3 checkoff before April 15. She also spoke of the bills currently before the NC House and Senate for public financing of a pilot program for legislative seats and Council of State (CoS) races. The Senate is considering a bill to fund all CoS races in 2012. The House is considering a bill to fund a 3-race pilot for CoS races in 2008.



O'Linda Williams, right, of Moore County introduces Glenda Clendenin and Molly Beacham.

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## NOTES FROM PAULATICS

Paula Wolf

### SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE WELCOMES LWV

The LWV of Henderson County took a field trip to the General Assembly in April and they had productive meetings with several Members of their legislative delegation. They topped off their full day of activities by observing the Senate Committee on Finance where Committee Chairman Sen. David Hoyle (D-Gaston) graciously recognized League members in the audience.

### WOMEN'S ADVOCACY DAY

NC Women United's *Women's Advocacy Day* is planned for **Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Please visit their website at <http://www.rtpnet.org/ncwu/> where you may sign up for alerts and to volunteer for this important event. Hope to see you in Raleigh that day.



**THE LWVNC BOARD 2007-2009**

Members of the Board are, beginning in Row 1 from the left: Betty Ellerbee, (Wake) Treasurer; Judie Burke, (Orange, Durham, Chatham) (ODC); President; Brenda Rogers, (ODC) Vice president; Barbara Barnett, (Henderson) Secretary; Row 2, Nancy Birindelli (Dare); Carol Ellis (Lower Cape Fear); Audrey Albrecht (Lower Cape Fear); Kathleen Balogh (Asheville/Buncombe); Row 3, Beverly Hanly, (ODC) Voter Editor; Sandra Wright (Moore); Louise Romanov (Wake); Fran Syptak (Catawba), Bev Kawalec (ODC). Their terms will begin in June.

**OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS**

Directors completing their terms are Lee Mahan Evans (Moore), Mary Klenz (Charlotte/Mecklenburg), June Kimmel (Charlotte/Mecklenberg), Marian Lowry (Henderson). See their picture on Page 1. The League thanks them for their years of service and accomplishment.

NC VOTER SPRING, 2007

**LEAGUES TRAVEL TO RALEIGH FOR A FIELD TRIP TO THE LEGISLATURE**

Mary Klenz

Four local Leagues have participated in LWVNC's Legislative Field Trip Program so far this session. Orange, Durham and Chatham (ODC), Henderson, Dare and Currituck members have traveled to Raleigh on three different occasions to tour the legislature, be briefed on legislative priorities, meet with their Representatives and Senators to talk about bills currently in both the House and the Senate, and observe committee meetings.

ODC President Jan Richmond arranged for lunch with their local delegation to review the status on the issues. Lee Luebke, Henderson President, arranged appointments with the Henderson representatives to update them on priorities and to hear their views on bills they will be voting on. Nancy Birindelli, Co-President of Dare and Susan Hill of Currituck organized members from their region to meet with their Senator and Representatives.

As part of the program some members met with Gary Bartlett, Director of NC State Board of Elections. Others heard from LWVNC Lobbyist Paula Wolf and were briefed on the issues by Bob Hall, Executive Director and Researcher from Democracy NC.

ODC members met with Speaker and Representative Joe Hackney and Representatives Verla Insko, Paul Luebke and Senator Bob Atwater. Henderson members visited with Senator Tom Apodaca and Representatives Carolyn Justus and Trudy Walend. The Dare and Currituck group met with the Chief of Staff of Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight and Representatives Bill Owens and Timothy Spear.

The 2007 legislative session began in January and will continue through June or beyond. The LWV, working with coalitions, is focusing on passage of a Same Day Registration bill (HB91/SB195) and an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The LWVNC favors a 10% EITC (SB955/HB51). Other bills have been filed calling for a 5% credit. Bills for Voter Owned Elections for Council of State were recently filed. The LWVNC will also be following these bills as they move through the process.

Mary Klenz chairs the field trip program. Local LWV's are encouraged to make arrangements for their members to participate during May and June. Email or call Mary for details: 704-542-9858, klenzm@bellsouth.net.



## LWVNC LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Bev Kawalec

### GOALS:

- Empower all League members to be effective advocates with their elected officials
- Educate members on the legislative process and issues
- Prepare Leaguers for contact with their legislators in their home districts
- Engage members in the formation of public policy
- Encourage coalitions with other organizations which are working on related issues
- Increase visibility and the presence of the LWV at the Legislature
- Influence legislation related to LWVNC priorities.

### FOUR PART PROGRAM:

**Field Trips** The State League is conducting Field Trips to the legislature for local Leagues with Mary Klenz as the leader. These Field Trips familiarize Leaguers with the legislative process and people. Participants get an introduction to how the legislature works, and hear presentations on the League's Issues for Action.

**An Advocacy Committee** is working in the State legislature with Beverly Kawalec as leader. The Advocacy Committee has a Point Person assigned to each Issue for Action. The Point Person becomes knowledgeable on her/his issue, attends legislative committee meetings on her issue, gives testimony, writes articles for the VOTER, provides information for the web site, works with the coalition partners and works with the lobbyist. Committee members provide back up for the Point Person.

Issues for Emphasis (Action Items) are:

- Tax Reform
- Campaign and Election Reform
- Death Penalty Moratorium
- Redistricting

Secondary Issues on which the League may take action are:

- Environmental Quality/Natural Resources
- Human Resources/Social Policy (Education, Housing, Women's Issues, Elder Care)
- National Popular Vote

**A lobbyist**, Ms. Paula Wolf, ([wolf@deltaforce.net](mailto:wolf@deltaforce.net)) has been hired to:

- Monitor legislation that LWVNC has designated as high priority.
- Prepare and distribute by email a legislative update and alerts to all who request them.
- Prepare sample letters and talking points for members to use when contacting legislators.
- Collaborate with other organizations that support the LWVNC legislative program.
- Provide legislative updates and other pertinent information on the League's website.

### **Local League Visits with Legislators in their Home Districts**

All local Leagues should schedule visits with their legislators in their home districts. Leaguers can prepare for these visits by subscribing to the Legislative Update, *The Voice*, by attending the Field Trips, by reading the web site, and by reading The VOTER. These visits should be strategically timed to have an impact when the League issues are being considered. State Board members and Advocacy Committee members are available to assist the local Leagues on legislative issues.



Left: Jean Snider, Beulah Spellman and Patricia Lail all members of our newest League, Currituck County. Patricia is the co-president with Susan Hill, not shown.



**CONVENTION,  
2007**



Left: Lee Leubbe (President) and Mary Ann Engel (both of Henderson) telling "How to Grow Your League".



Jeanette Senecal, LWVUS Staff, speaking on "League Building Around Our Issues" Elisabaeth MacNamara, LWVUS and Liaison to LWVNC participated in this presentation also



"Leaguers" , left, listening to presentation

Henderson "Flappers", below, perform Saturday night

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Elaine Marshall, above right, NC Secretary of State and keynote speaker, with Barbara Panaritis, Henderson



Brenda Rogers, left, State Board and ODC directs a question on taxes to speaker



**MORE PICTURES ARE ON  
THE WEB SITE**