

The Voter of ODC



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October General Meeting

Speaker: Dr. James H. Johnson

Director of Urban Investment Strategies Center
Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise

**Topic: "The Economic Impact of the
Hispanic Population
on the State of North Carolina"**

Wednesday, October 10
10:00 to 11:00 AM

Room 406
Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise
Kenan Center
(Adjacent to the McColl Building & Kenan Flagler Business School)
UNC Campus, Chapel Hill

November General Meeting

Topic: Affordable Housing

Speakers:

**Rich Lee, Director,
Durham Affordable Housing Coalition**

**Chris Estes, Executive Director,
North Carolina Housing Coalition**

Wednesday, November 14
10:00 AM to 12:00 noon

Conference Room
Durham County Southwest Branch Public Library
3605 Shannon Road
Durham

Directions: Coming from south (Chapel Hill) or north on U.S. 15/501 (Durham-Chapel Hill Boulevard)...turn at Shannon Road intersection (by what used to be South Square—now Sam's and Target) and follow until you reach # 3605.

Upcoming Events

**October 16
Chatham County
Candidate Forum**

**October 24
Durham County
Candidate Forum**

**November 14
General Meeting
Affordable Housing**

**December 11
Holiday Dinner**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By
VICKI BOYER

Each One Reaches One

Remember the 60s? Yes, the 1960s. Many of us do. Anti-war demonstrations. Civil rights marches. Riots. Sit-ins. End the war Now! Stop the draft! Watts. Kent State. Flower Power! We wanted to change the world. We were certain we could change the world! And in our youth, we wanted it all, and we wanted it NOW!

Ah, The Summer of Love! It led to romance, children, couple-hood. A job--meaningful, of course. We got bogged down. Buying a house meant full time employment. Children need music lessons, braces, school clothes. The business of living took over our lives. For a long time that was our focus.

How many of your friends and acquaintances have lived this life? You and I----we are the lucky ones. We found a home in the League of Women Voters. We learned how to really effect change in the world! We learned how government really works, how to research information and put it in a format that could be readily shared with others. We learned how to lobby, how to persuade, how to be effective. We learned we COULD change the world!

And now it is time for us to share this valuable experience with our friends and acquaintances---those who were not lucky enough to find the League. Every one reaches one.

It is time for each and every member of the League to reach out. We need to convey to everyone we know that its not too late to change the world! And the place to learn to make that change is as a member of the League of Women Voters. We inform. We advocate. We lobby. We create change.

It is time for you to accept the challenge--an extension of the dream of our youth is to help others learn to do the same. Each one reaches one. If every member recruits a new member, then there are more to work on changing the world! We might even be able to effect change more quickly! Numbers speak!

LWV/ODC is part of a membership recruitment initiative, and Carol Sherrod and Linda Stryker-Loftic are receiving special training from LWVNC to help us recruit more members. Watch your newsletter and listen to announcements at our meetings for specific things YOU can implement to grow our League and share the dream. Talk to your neighbors and friends about the League.

The future of the League is up to YOU. YOU know it is not too late to change the world--Tell your friends. Tell your neighbors. Tell everyone you meet. Tell them, Its Not Too Late! There is still a little Flower Power left in all of us! Tell them, Join the League of Women Voters! We can show you how to change the world!

Hey, man, that's groovy!

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LWVUS Immigration Study is Underway: Plan to Participate

By the end of January 2008, the LWV of Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties must take consensus on LWVUS Immigration Study Questions. Between now and then, we are working to educate our members to be able to formulate responses to those questions.

As part of the process, we are using LWVUS Immigration Study material to help members and their communities learn about immigration issues. And, to further enable discussion and participation, we are holding small group meetings at a number of different times and places. Take advantage of this opportunity to engage longtime members and recruit new members.

Sign up now to attend a meeting by notifying one of the contacts below. *Reservations must be made at least one week in advance of meeting date (except for the Great Decisions Meeting at Fearington Village).*

Grassroots participation is one of the League's greatest strengths. Every member is strongly encouraged to be part of this difficult, but worthwhile endeavor.

LWVODC Schedule for Immigration Study Group Meetings to be held prior to the January ODC final response meeting

November 8, 1:30-3:30pm
*Great Decisions Meeting (75)**
No reservation required
Gathering Place, Fearington Village
Pittsboro, NC 27312

November 13, 7-9 pm
Bessie Carrington (12-15)*
1616 Pinecrest Road
Durham, NC 27705
bessiec@mindspring.com
489-8668

November 15, 10-noon
Jan Richmond (12-15)*
6600 Glen Forest Dr.
Chapel Hill, NC 27512
jwikrich@earthlink.net
408-0444

November 15, 2-4 pm
Carol Rist (10-12)*
84 Beverly Drive
Durham, NC 27707
Carol.rist@verison.net
490-4718

November 17, 10:00-noon
Vicki Boyer (6-8)*
105 Aberdeen Court
Carrboro, NC 27510
Viva.lwv@gmail.com
612-7079

November 10, 2-4 pm
Barbara Hardison (6-8)*
711 Twelve Post Trail
Mebane, NC 27302
forcats4@mebtel.net
304-0929

November 13, 7-9 pm
Cynthia Wertz (8-10)*
425 Old Oak Road
Pittsboro, NC 27312
Cynthia_wertz@embarqmail.com
542-6696

November 15, 7-9 pm
Joyce Colaiace (6-8)*
437 Crossvine Close
Fearington Village
Pittsboro, NC 27312
colaiaj@aol.com
542-1052

November 16, 10:00-noon
Gay Eddy (6-8)*
120 Channing Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27516
jgeddy@earthlink.net
933-5486

*The number in parentheses connotes the number of people that will be accommodated at each session.

Health Care Forum Challenges Attendees to Take Action for Health Care Reform



The League of Women Voters/Clinical Lecture Series Health Care Forum “Affordable Healthcare for Everyone” How Do We Get There?” was held September 29, 2007 in the School of Social Work at UNC-Chapel Hill. The 3-hour event was attended by 130 people.

Jon Oberlander provided us with an academic overview of the complex challenges of health care reform at the national level. He reminded us of a similar health care debate in the early 1990’s except now the number of uninsured people in the US has risen from 35.5 to 47 million and health care costs have risen from 12.3% to 16% of GDP. Over the last two decades, the cycle seems to be that we discover there is a crisis, discuss solutions, do nothing much about them, ignore the issue, and rediscover the crisis. The number of nonelderly uninsured has risen, the percentage of employers offering health insurance has declined, and health insurance premiums have risen two to four times as much as the overall inflation or earning rate. While the media constantly reports on the worsening of the health care situation, interest groups, institutions, ideology, and indifference are obstacles to reform. Health care reform over the next years will be influenced by the 2008 election, Iraq, economy and budget, state health care reforms, the middle class and the “anxiously insured,” and business. He closed by saying it would be very important to get business on the side of health care reform and reminded us that that is how we have Medicare today.

Adam Searing provided us with a consumer advocacy perspective at the state level. He began his talk by picking up on Jon Oberlander’s discussion of getting the “anxiously insured” on board for health care reform. He emphasized that while we do much worse than many other developed countries on many health indicators, even Americans who are aware of this difference assume they are still in “first class.” He cited a recent article in the Journal of American Medicine about a study that found that the richest bracket of people in America had about the same health status as the poorest bracket of people in the UK. A recent example of how hard it is to pass health reform in North Carolina can be seen around the re-authorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program where all Republican and two of eight Democratic representatives voted against a bill that would improve the health care of 120,000 children in North Carolina.

Verla Insko continued by providing us with a North Carolina legislative view grounded in a long record of health-related activities. She emphasized that state level progress is being made and is laying the groundwork for bigger change. She enumerated the bills that have been passed (i.e. high-risk pool, two obesity related bills, mental health parity bill, a small business \$250 tax credit per year per employee, health care for all children up to 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) at no cost and up to 300% FPL if families pay 100% of the premium cost, just to name a few). She has introduced a bill to add an amendment to the NC constitution to make health care a fundamental right. It hasn’t been able to get to a vote, and Verla is now working on a bill to set up a state commission around this issue to get more interest in it. She stated that gubernatorial candidates know that health care reform is a top voter priority. It is important to keep pressure on higher officials as we enter the election cycle. She emphasized that no plan is perfect but it may be better than the status quo. We also have to be willing to answer “yes” when we are asked “Do you want government in your medicine cabinet?”

The panel discussion, moderated by Vicki Boyer, addressed audience questions around health care proposals of different gubernatorial and presidential candidates, cost containment, preventive care as a method of cost containment, “cost” versus “price” for pharmaceuticals, working at the state level to push for movement at the federal level and ended with suggestions for public advocacy. These included letting our representatives know what we think (i.e. that their votes on SCHIP are unacceptable), working with organizations like the League of Women Voters and Health Care for All, and lending money, time and expertise to groups such as the North Carolina Health Access Coalition.

Many thanks to Evelin Brinich who organized the forum with the able assistance of Virginia Dickie and Anna McCullough.

Candidate Forums

Pittsboro Municipal Elections

October 16
7:00 to 8:30 PM,
Chatham County Courthouse
District Court Room
12 East Street, Pittsboro
Candidates: Mayor
Board of Commissioners

Durham Municipal Elections

October 24
7:00 to 8:30 PM,
Durham County Main Library Auditorium
300 North Roxboro Street, Durham
Candidates: Mayor
Three Councilmen at Large

These meetings are free, and the public is encouraged to attend.

Chatham County Land Transfer Tax Educational Meetings

Chatham County is offering five educational opportunities around Chatham for a Commissioner and County Staff Members to answer questions and concerns about the proposed tax. Citizens will learn more about: What is a land transfer tax? What is excluded? What are projected revenues? How will these revenues be used? How does the land transfer tax differ from current school impact fees? Why will we be voting on this on the November ballot? Etc. These questions and yours will be explained and answered.

Meetings were held at the North Chatham School on September 20 and at the Western Senior Center in Siler City on September 27. The schedule of the remaining meetings with place, time and Commissioner presiding follows:

Thursday, Oct. 4: Chatham Central High School Auditorium, 14950 NC Highway 902 West, in Bear Creek (southwest Chatham), 7 pm. Directions: Take NC 902 West from Pittsboro and cross over US 421. Go about two miles to the school on the right. - Commissioner Carl Thompson

Thursday, Oct. 11: Liberty Chapel United Church of Christ (sanctuary), Old US 1, Moncure, 7 pm. Directions: Pittsboro-Moncure Road deadends at Old US 1 in Moncure. Turn left on Old US 1 and go about one mile to the church. -Commissioner Mike Cross

Thursday, Oct. 18: Eastern Chatham Senior Center, 365 Highway 87 North, Pittsboro, 7 pm. Directions: From the courthouse circle in Pittsboro, head west on US 64 Business (also West St.). At the first stoplight, take a right on Graham Road (NC Hwy. 87 North) and go about one-third mile. The senior center will be on your left. - Commissioner George Lucier

Updated Membership Directory and Much More on the LWV-ODC website, www.lwvodic.org.

Be sure to check out the LWV/ODC website and you will find not only our updated membership directory, but also information about League programs such as our new Immigration Study. And thanks to our health care forum, you will also find a lot of information about health care reform. The website also has links to your local Elections Department, to all League websites, and to other sites of interest.

Many Thanks To Our Contributors

In an effort to keep our membership affordable, the LWV-ODC has kept its dues at \$45 for several years, in spite of an increase in the portion of our dues that are sent to the state and national organizations. For each individual member, we remit \$26.80 to the LWV-US and \$12 to the LWV-NC. As you can easily calculate, that does not leave much for local operations. So we are very appreciative of the following people who have made extra contributions this year to this year's operating and educational funds:

Contributions to the LWV-ODC:

Roberta C. Black
Else Bolotin
Susan W Brewer.
Judie Burke,
Bessie and Paul Carrington
Eliska L Chanlett.
Sara Coughlin
Jeanette Gay Eddy
Mary Ann & Ed Gross
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Betty B. Sanders

Contribution to the Talvitie Scholarship Fund

Brenda Rogers

Paula Wolf, LWVNC Lobbyist Reports to LWVODC

By Barbara Nettesheim

At the LWVODC September meeting, Paula Wolf reported to us about her work as League lobbyist and the bills that passed the legislature this past session which the League, working in coalition with other groups, helped to pass.

The main bills which Paula mentioned were:

1. The Earned Income Tax Credit (for which the League has been working for years)
2. Same day Voter Registration (which allows a person to register and vote at same day registration sites)
3. The Voter-Owned Elections "pilot" which will provide public financing for three Council of State officers, the Commissioner of Agriculture, the Commissioner of Insurance and the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
4. The Instant Run-off Voting "pilot" which will be used by Cary in this fall's election.

Paula mentioned that the presence of the LWV-NC at the General Assembly is very important, as are the League member emails, phone calls and letters in support of bills, so please keep it up!

After Paula's talk members discussed what WE can work on this year. Suggested were: What the lottery money for education is used for, aging issues, campaign finance reform, transportation issues (including infrastructure), immigration and other issues. We are currently taking part in an LWVUS immigration study. Please go to one of the group discussions on immigration and take part in that big project.



Recognizing our Honorary Members

by Evelin Brinich

This month we honor **Mary Helen Hayman**, who has been a member of the League since 1948.

Mary Helen joined the League of Women Voters of Chapel Hill shortly after its inception in 1948. She became the second president, following Helen Gillin. Mary Helen joined the League because she shared an interest in politics with her husband, a political scientist at UNC. One of her early activities was working on the newsletter. The most memorable event during her presidency was hosting Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt at a luncheon on the top floor of the newly built Morehead Planetarium. With this event the League gained visibility and respect in the community. Mary Helen recalled that Eleanor Roosevelt had come to present a formal lecture at the UNC and agreed to speak at the League luncheon. She hired a taxi to call on Mrs. Roosevelt at the Carolina Inn and together they drove to the Planetarium. The League had not been allowed to have chairs for the luncheon which, therefore, became a stand-up buffet. For her talk, Mrs. Roosevelt had a chair and everyone else sat on the floor. Mary Helen recalled that the League membership doubled because the well-advertised event was "for members only."

Aside from her many League activities, Mary Helen was active in other areas in the community. In 1964, together with the UNC International Student and Scholar Services and Church Women United, Mary Helen began the Conversation Partners program, a program for UNC-Chapel Hill foreign students and their spouses -- especially recent arrivals to the U.S. International participants meet with a Conversation Partner for private one-on-one conversations for an hour a week. These weekly meetings continue to be a focus for Mary Helen. Asked how we could improve our services, Mary Helen recommended offering meetings at different times and in different places to make it easier for working members to participate more frequently.

Membership News

By Evelin Brinich

Thanks a million to all the members who sent in their membership dues in a timely manner! You have made our membership job so much easier! Thanks to our membership initiative, we have had 14 new members since May! October is the month where I go through our data base and pull out the members who have not paid for their dues and mark them "inactive." That means we keep these members' contact information, just in case they should they change their minds and join again some time in the future. Unfortunately, our budget constraints do not allow us to continue sending "inactive" or non-paying members our newsletters and announcements. I urge any previous member who has not paid this year to drop me an email and let me know your situation and how we can make membership worthwhile to you.

Welcome to our newest members:

Martin R. Marks
422 Cedar Berry Lane
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-7209
esmar9@earthlink.net

Joan Wrede
105 Founder's Ridge Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
JNJWREDE@yahoo.com

Dawn Shamp
3928 Mt. Sinai Rd.
Durham, NC 27705-7916
493-2723
dawnshamp@mac.com

Please note new email for Judie Burke:
judiephil@embarqmail.com

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<http://www.lwvdc.org>

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.

League Calendar

October 10 10:00 AM	October General Meeting Economic Impact of the Hispanic Population on the State of North Carolina James H. Johnson, Jr.	Kenan Flagler Business School UNC Chapel Hill
October 16 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM	Candidate Forum Pittsboro Municipal Election	Chatham County Courthouse Pittsboro
October 24 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM	Candidate Forum Durham Municipal Election	Durham County Main Library 300 N. Roxboro Street, Durham
November 8	Local Election Day	
November 14 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon	November General Meeting Affordable Housing Speakers: Rich Lee, Durham Affordable Housing Coalition Chris Estes, NC Housing Coalition	Durham County Southwest Branch Public Library 3605 Shannon Road Durham
December 11	Annual Holiday Dinner	Governors Club