

**The Voter of ODC**



**Inside this issue:**

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| January Meeting                  | 1 |
| February Meeting                 |   |
| Presidents message               | 2 |
| Mix & Mingle<br>State Convention | 3 |
| Membership                       | 4 |
| Environment                      | 5 |
| NC Legislature                   | 6 |
| Lobbying and Ethics<br>Reform    | 7 |
| League calendar                  | 8 |

**January General Meeting**

Hargraves Center  
215 North Roberson Street, Chapel Hill  
January 18, 2007  
10:00AM

**Gerry Cohen**

**Director of Legislative Drafting  
North Carolina General Assembly**

**Speaking on  
Alternative Redistricting**

Gerry Cohen is a former member of the Chapel Hill Board of Aldermen (now the Chapel Hill Town Council). He was elected in 1973 when he was a law student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is currently the Director of Legislative Drafting for the North Carolina General Assembly. He will speak to us on Congressional and legislative redistricting, and may challenge the LWVNC position of support for an independent commission for drawing new plans for redistricting.

**February General Meeting**

Hargraves Center  
215 North Roberson Street, Chapel Hill  
February 15, 2007  
10:00 AM

**Ilana Dubster, Executive Director  
Hispanic Liaison Organization of Chatham County**

**Speaking on**

**Barriers Facing Latino Immigrants  
Re: Government Services and Voting  
from a Regional or State Perspective**

Ilana Dubster is originally from Brazil and in 1996 she became a United States citizen. She holds an Associate Degree in Social Studies from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel, and speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese and Hebrew. She serves on the Governor's Council on Hispanic/Latino Affairs and is a board member of the North Carolina Justice Center.

**Upcoming Events**

**General Meetings**

Jan. 18  
Hargraves Center  
Feb. 15  
Hargraves Center

Feb. 26  
Mix & Mingle  
Panzanella Restaurant

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## President's Message

### by Jan Richmond



I am happy to announce that our fall fundraiser was successful. In December the Artscenter sent us a check for \$1,375, which was the League's portion of the proceeds from the play, *1776*. In addition, Panera Bread contributed to the League the \$219 they had received in donations during the month of the play. Thank you for supporting this event and attending the social afterwards. These types of activities have enabled us to keep our dues at the same level even as national and state have raised the per member payment this past year.

Member support of our fundraising activities also enables us to concentrate on the three goals of redistricting, judicial independence and membership recruitment, which the board voted to address this year. These three goals came from the program and positions voted by you at the annual meeting.

A subcommittee of the board is working on membership recruitment this month. We need your input and help in determining how best to address this issue and bring new members into the LWVODC. In particular we need to recruit members who are willing to take on responsibilities and be involved in good government. If you have ideas on getting new and current members involved in League projects please contact me.

Currently we have 171 members, so our numbers are good. Many members pay dues but do not participate in League activities. This helps us financially and in showing support for our positions. We appreciate the continued support of members who cannot be active, and realize not everyone will take an active role in LWVODC. However, we also need members to serve on the board, head focus groups, join the lobby corps, the observer corps and especially to serve on the voter service committee. All members are invited to attend membership recruitment task force meetings. I will be announcing the times and places at our general meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

The January general meeting will help kick off our trip to the legislature which is scheduled for Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. This trip will replace our general meeting in March. We will be offering carpooling from three different areas. Sign up sheets will be available at the general meeting or please call me at 408-0444 if you are interested in attending. This will be an exciting day of meeting with our State Legislators from each county. Of particular interest is that Joe Hackney, Orange County, is expected to become the new speaker of the House of Representatives. Many of you got to speak and meet with him last year at our Mix & Mingle. This will be a full, fun and interesting day in Raleigh where we can promote LWV positions.

**League of Women Voters  
Orange/Durham/Chatham  
P.O. Box 3397  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-3397  
919-419-1650  
[Http://lwvodic.org](http://lwvodic.org)**

#### **Officers 2006-2007**

**President**  
Jan Richmond  
408-0444

**1st Vice President**  
Bessie Carrington  
489-8668

**2nd Vice President**  
Else Bolotin  
259-7095

**Secretary**  
Carol Sherrod  
542-6650

**Treasurer**  
Barbara Hardison  
919-304-0929

**Nominating Committee**  
Gay Eddy  
933-5486

#### **Directors 2005-2007**

Joyce Colaiace  
(Program)  
542-1052

Kay Hunt  
(Special Projects)  
542-1750

Evelin Brinich  
(Membership)  
967-5819

#### **Directors 2006-2008**

Cynthia Wertz  
(Webmaster/IT Consultant)  
542-6696

Carol Rist  
(Voter Editor)  
490-5718

## MIX & MINGLE

With

**Invited Mayors and Local Elected Officials**

From

**Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties**

5:00 PM to 7:30 PM

February 26, 2007

**Panzanella Restaurant**

Carr Mill, Carrboro

\$20.00 per person for

Pizza, hearty hors d'oeuvres, iced tea, dessert

Cash Bar

**Please note that the time has been changed from the time published in the December Voter. The Mix & Mingle will begin at 5:00 PM.**

Reservations are due by February 21. Send your check for \$20 per person, payable to LWV-ODC, to:

Joyce Colaiace  
437 Fearington Post  
Pittsboro. NC 27312

**State Convention  
League of Women Voters of North Carolina  
March 23-25, 2007**

**Little River Golf Resort  
Carthage, NC**

It's not too late to make plans to attend the LWVNC state convention. The LWVNC convention will begin Friday afternoon, March 23. The convention is open to all members and is within daily driving range for many of our local members. The main day of the program is on Saturday. You may attend for the weekend or one day. Registration is \$20.00 and the cost of staying overnight or for meals is very reasonable. You will also be able to play golf before or after the conference at reasonable rates. If you are interested in attending any day of the convention please contact President Jan Richmond at 408-0444.



## Changing the World—One light bulb at a time

from Cynthia Guerra of the Audubon Society

Most of us want to do our part to reduce pollution and lessen our personal contribution to global warming. But what can one individual do? For starters you can begin using compact fluorescent (CFL) bulbs.

You may be familiar with these bulbs—they look like a swirl of glass—you may have even tried one in the past. Well, if you tried one in the past or never tried one before, now is the time. Technological advancements have made these bulbs consumer friendly, reliable and a great substitute for traditional bulbs. And here's the best part:

- A typical 60-watt bulb lasts 1,000 hours and costs 62 cents a month to power; a CFL lasts 12,000 hours and costs 16 cents a month to power.
- If 100 million people replaced one bulb in their house with a CFL, 6.57 billion kilo-watt hours would be saved per year. This is enough energy to power 619,811 homes, or a city of 1.5 million people. That's the equivalent of shutting down two typical power plants!
- If 100 million people replaced one bulb in their house with a CFL, the national annual carbon dioxide (green house gas) emission would be reduced by 13 billion pounds. That's the equivalent of taking 1.3 million cars off the road or not burning 29,963 railcars of coal.
- For every 100 million CFL's installed, 700 million regular bulbs are not sent to landfills.

**What a simple way to improve the global environment,  
Cut your energy consumption, and save some money!!**

### The League's Position on Environmental Protection and Energy Use

The League supports the preservation of the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem and maximum protection of public health and the environment....The League's environmental protection and anti-pollution goals aim to prevent ecological degradation and to reduce and control pollutants before they go down the sewer, up the chimney or into the landfill.

#### **Energy:**

The League supports:

- Energy goals and policies that acknowledge the United States as a responsible member of the world community;
- Reduction of energy growth rates;
- Use of a variety of energy sources, with emphasis on conserving energy and using energy-efficient technologies;

*continued on p. 6*

## **Legislative Field Trip Wednesday, March 14**

Tour the General Assembly, get a briefing on legislative issues, visit your legislators' offices, sit in on committee meetings and observe the assembly in session. This trip will replace our March general meeting. We will be offering carpooling from three different areas. Sign up at the general meeting, or call Jan Richmond at 408-0444 if you are interested in attending.

## **North Carolina General Assembly**

The North Carolina General Assembly will convene at noon on January 24, but House and Senate committee meetings are well under way. You can follow the committee meetings by going to the NC General Assembly website (just google North Carolina General Assembly). The General Assembly website is a treasure trove of information. You can learn all about your representative and senator, what committees they serve on and how to contact them. You can also follow legislation which is already working its way through committees. Then when you go on the legislative field trip you will be very knowledgeable when speaking to your legislators.

The Democratic caucus has chosen Joe Hackney, who represents Chatham, Moore and Orange Counties, to be their candidate for Speaker of the House. By the time this newsletter is distributed, he will most likely have been chosen by the entire House to be the Speaker.

## **League's Position on Environmental Protection and Energy Use** (continued from p. 5)

- The Environmentally sound use of energy resources, with consideration of the entire cycle of energy production;
- Predominant reliance on renewable resources;
- Policies that limit reliance on nuclear fission;
- Action by appropriate levels of government to encourage the use of renewable resources and energy conservation through funding for research and development, financial incentives, rate setting policies and mandatory standards;
- Mandatory energy-conservation measures, including thermal standards for building efficiency, new appliance standards and standards for new automobiles with no relaxation of auto-emission control requirements;
- Policies to reduce energy demand and minimize the need for new generating capacity through techniques such as marginal cost or peak-load pricing or demand-management programs;
- Maintaining deregulation of oil and natural gas prices;
- Assistance for low-income individuals when energy policies bear unduly on the poor.

**From NC Policy Watch**

**Lobbying and Ethics Reform in 2007**

Submitted by Kay Hunt

The lobbying and ethics reform legislation passed last year is a significant win for North Carolina. Not only will the law have a beneficial impact on the public's faith in government and the overall quality and integrity of the state's laws, rules and regulations, it will also begin to level the political playing field between nonprofits and the larger, more powerful moneyed interests with which they must compete in helping to shape public policy.

If the new ethics and lobby reform bill has any substantive shortcomings, it's mostly in the areas in which it fails to go far enough in advancing the reform agenda advanced by groups like the Coalition for Lobbying Reform (*of which League is a member*). Though improved significantly by last year's omnibus reform bill, North Carolina's ethics and lobbying laws remain in need of additional improvements.

More to do:

**Gift Ban Loopholes**—While the new law imposes a general ban on gifts from lobbyists to public officials, it also contains a long list of exceptions to this rule. Some of these are obvious and innocuous (it's O.K., for instance, to give lawmakers a plaque or informational materials like a report or a video), but others invite attempts to evade the law's intent.

For example, the new law includes a lengthy and complex set of exceptions designed to allow groups represented by lobbyists to foot the bill for such things as travel, lodging and entertainment at a variety of educational, quasi-official and official events. While many such events are, no doubt, worthwhile, it remains a mystery to most reform advocates as to why a public official's attendance or participation in such an event should provide license to enjoy a stay in a luxury resort or a round of golf on the tab of a powerful corporation—especially one that lobbies state government. If North Carolina has a legitimate interest in sending its public officials to, for example, a regional conference of legislators, wouldn't it make more sense for the state to appropriate a reasonable sum to provide its envoys with a decent travel budget, rather than leaving them beholden to the private interest groups?

The law also contains another worrisome exception for gifts from lobbyists "given or received as a part of a business, civic, religious, fraternal, personal or commercial relationship not related to the person's public service [provided] a reasonable person would conclude that the gift was not given for the purpose of lobbying."

**Campaign Contributions**—Similar invitations to avoid the law's intent exist in the realm of campaign contributions, where the new law's attempt to ban contributions from lobbyists appear unlikely to succeed. Just last week, it came to light that a political action committee that features state legislators in its leadership is already soliciting contributions from lobbyists in 2007 (the contribution ban doesn't apply to PAC's). Here, the real solution appears to lie not just in an effort to further tighten the ban, but in enacting a system of public financing.

**Sunshine on the Process**—Yet another area in which the new law delivers only partial reform is in rules of the new Ethics Commission. Though the establishment of the Commission itself was a significant step, the law delegates much less authority to it than is given to similar bodies in other states. It also allows for complaints and hearings to remain "confidential." In this area, reformers must hope that once the Commission is fully established and demystified, legislators will lose some of their fear of a strong and open ethics watchdog.

Ultimately, however, the best medicine for what ails the state's lawmaking system is a renewed faith in public solutions and a renewed commitment to public service.

League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and  
Chatham Counties  
P.O. Box 3397  
Chapel Hill NC 27515-3397  
Tel: 919-419-1650  
<http://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

|                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| January 18, 2007<br>10:00 AM      | January General Meeting<br>Gerry Cohen, Director of Legislative Drafting<br>North Carolina General Assembly<br>Subject: Alternative Districting | Hargraves Center<br>215 North Roberson Street<br>Chapel Hill |
| February 15<br>10:00 AM           | February General Meeting<br>Ilana Dubester, Executive Director<br>Hispanic Liaison Organization of Chatham County                               | Hargraves Center<br>215 North Roberson Street<br>Chapel Hill |
| February 26<br>5:00 PM to 7:00 PM | Mix and Mingle with Mayors and<br>Local Elected Officials   | Panzanella<br>Carr Mill, Carrboro                            |
| March 14                          | Visit to North Carolina Legislature   |  |
| March 23-25                       | LWV of North Carolina State Convention  | Little River Golf Resort<br>Carthage, NC                     |