



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WAKE COUNTY
Working to safeguard democracy through civic involvement

VOTER

January 2010

LUNCH WITH THE LEAGUE
January 22, 2010, 12 noon – 1:15 pm
Hargett Street YWCA, 554 E. Hargett Street

HEALTHCARE REFORM AND NORTH CAROLINIANS

by NC Representative Verla Insko, Orange County

Representative Verla Insko will bring her healthcare expertise to survey the current health care reform situation as it affects North Carolinians today. Since her election to the NC House in 1996, Verla has worked to bring teacher salaries to above the national average, to reduce class size for the primary grades and to reduce the dropout rate. She was primary sponsor of the bill that created the high-risk health insurance pool and was primary co-sponsor of the mental health parity bill.

As Chair of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, she has increased funding for child-care subsidy, early childhood education, healthcare for children birth to age 19 and services for mental health, developmental disabilities and substance abuse services. She supports keeping Medicaid provider rates high enough to attract good providers while demanding accountability for the expenditure of public dollars.

From 1988-1994, she was a health program administrator at the UNC School of Medicine in the UNC Comprehensive Sickle Cell Program. From 1994 until 1999, she was an organizational development consultant and worked with non-profit and government agencies.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Lisa Mowat

We hope you all had Happy Holidays and wish everyone a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing many of you at the Lunch with the League where we will hear Representative Verla Insko inform us about healthcare reform.

I am including some basic information about program and planning from League Basics in preparation for our planning meeting in 2010. Program is the League's reason for being, the basis for both advocacy and education efforts. League advocacy is based on member study and agreement on selected issues and involves concerted efforts to achieve public policies consistent with League positions. The program process is specified in the bylaws and includes the following steps:

Formal adoption (by members at an annual meeting or by state/national convention delegates) of an issue for study.

Member study and agreement on broad concepts.

Formulation of a position by the appropriate board of directors.

Legislative action as directed by the board of directors.

Annual or biennial re-adoption of the position.

League program arises from suggestions of members. What are your program interests?

A Brief Report on the December 2nd Meeting of the Wake County School Board

by Betty Ellerbee with thanks to Tim Simmons, Wake Education Partnership

Ron Margiotta was elected as chair of the School Board and Debra Goldman was elected as vice chair. The chair has the right to name committee members, abolish committees and guide debate. The chair normally gives up the gavel before participating in debate over issues.

A resolution to change student assignment policy was introduced. A sentence which stated "promoting neighborhood schools with proximity to home consideration" was added while a sentence which contained "creating and maintaining diverse study body" was deleted. Because copies of the full resolution were unavailable to the public, there was considerable confusion. This resolution, after various motions and amendments, was referred to the policy committee: Ron Margiotta, Chair, Anne McLaurin, Vice Chair, Carolyn Morrison, and Debra Goldman. The policy committee meets on 2nd Tuesday from 2:30 to 4 pm. (In the past few weeks, several committee meetings have been canceled, including the Committee of the Whole meeting before the regular meeting of the School Board.) View the proposed changes at <http://www.newsobserver.com/content/media/2009/12/2/6200.pdf>

A resolution to put an immediate end to year-round conversions and mandatory assignments was changed to give the school system 90 days to survey parents and collect information.

For a full report, titled In Context, go to <http://www.wakeedpartnership.org/>.

The EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT by Joann Robertson

Attending Board of Education bimonthly meetings will be high on the agenda for members of the League Education Committee in 2010. League members who are interested in issues and actions to be taken by the Board of Education but who have not yet joined the LWV Ed Committee may also attend. Board of Education meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at the WCPSS building, 3600 Wake Forest Rd in Raleigh with the committee of the whole convening at 1 pm followed by the Board meeting at 3 pm. Both are open to the public. The next League Ed Committee meeting will be held on January 7, 3 pm at the League office.

LEAGUE MEMBERS THAT WE WILL MISS by Lucinda Chew

Wake League members are saddened by the deaths of **Mary Rose and Bill Rauffer** on November 5th and 23rd, respectively. Mary Rose, an active member for more than 25 years, was involved in many League activities. She served on the Board of Directors and worked on studies with the Housing, Eldercare and Education Committees. Bill supported and often accompanied Mary Rose in many League endeavors. We could always count on Mary Rose's originality for the centerpieces on the University Club's tables at many League luncheons and with skits and songs honoring particular members.

On November 28th **John Nader** passed away. John was the husband of a past Wake League President, Sheila Nader. The couple became the Wake League's first "Household Members" after a National LWV convention approved that membership classification. John was on the Board of Directors during the 80's and early 90's.

A CHANCE FOR LEAGUE FOLLOW THROUGH by Marie Moylan

The national, state and local LWVs have long held positions that support actions to increase the supply of housing affordable for low and moderate income households. In Wake County, we have advocated for such programs, as well as supported transitional housing as one approach to the problem of homelessness. Over the past year, we have attended meetings of the Affordable Housing Task Force, addressed the City Council as well as the County Commissioners in support of establishing and maintaining affordable housing when it was threatened by a vocal minority. We have also attended meetings for the development of the framework of the Raleigh Comprehensive Plan 2030.

Now, the next step is underway. Every five years the City of Raleigh updates their five-year Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan identifies the housing challenges and other needs and priorities of Raleigh's low-income communities and proposes steps to take to address those needs and priorities using federal funds as well as local affordable housing bond funds. Since residents are often most intimately aware of trends in their neighborhood, public input on needs and priorities is essential for the effective use of these limited resources.

The Community Development Department has begun the planning process for the Raleigh Consolidated Plan 2010-2015. This Plan must be completed and sent to HUD by April/May 2010. Under Element E Housing, 34 of the Action Items are designated "short term" which means they need to be included in this Consolidated Plan.

There have been two meetings so far. Congregations for Social Justice members were active advocates at the November 11th meeting, and I represented the LWV at the 12/8 meeting. There will be two more public meetings one in January and the other in February. One will be in the Method area and the other will be in northwest Raleigh. **If ever there was a chance for LWV members to walk-the-walk, this is it!** According to the Planning Department, the meetings engage participants and are designed to gather public input. Short term actions will be discussed to help provide the basis for the Action Plan for Year 1 of the five year plan. One resource for the suggested actions is (www.Raleighnc.gov/publications/Planning/Comprehensive_Plan). Also, if you would like copies of the handouts on housing from the 11/20 Lunch with the League meeting, call me at 781-5449.

THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE BRIEF by Elizabeth Fensin

The Environment Committee is:

Considering a position on developments concerning Falls Lake,

Considering partnering with other organizations about development around Falls Lake and the Little River, and

Reviewing how coastal US states have been impacted by offshore drilling.

BROADCASTS AND REBROADCASTS ON CHANNEL 11 by Mary Martorella

Watch the Raleigh TV station, Channel 11 for broadcasts of the School Board meetings and the City Council meetings. The City Council meetings broadcast live, and the School Board meetings are rebroadcasts. The Channel 11 schedule is on their website www.Raleigh.nc.org. These meetings can be recorded so you can watch them at your leisure. I watched the 12/8 School Board meeting and it was definitely high drama. The new minority had no idea of what was coming.

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LWV-W Calendar 2010

Jan 22 Fri	12 noon- 1:15 pm	Lunch with the League	Hargett Street YWCA 554 E. Hargett Street
Feb 14 Sun		90th birthday of League of Women Voters	The Heritage 1200 Carlos Drive
Mar 11 Thurs	8 pm	Program Planning Meeting	TBD
May 11 Tues		Annual Meeting	

Board of Director meetings – 2nd Thursday, 7 pm, League Office

Committee Meetings (open to all members and guests)

Education	1 st Thursday, 3-4:30 pm at League Office
Environment	4 th Wednesday, 7:30 pm at League Office
Lunch with the League	4 th Friday, noon-1:15 pm, Hargett Street YWCA

The LWVUS ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

You can access the website by going to the link on the Wake LWV website or by going to www.LWVUS.org. Then, open the members tab and subscribe as indicated to receive the monthly **LeaguE-Voice** for up-to-date news, activities, and other important information.