

League of Women Voters of Henderson County

ELECTED OFFICIALS BREAKFAST

1st Annual event

December 5
8 - 9:30 am

Golden Corral
\$12

Bring a friend

RSVP to Sharon Burlingame
Sburlingame401@gmail.com or 692-4012

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League's Address
LWVHC
PO Box 2238
Hendersonville, NC 28793
www.lwvhenc.org

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

December 14
3 - 5 pm

Come Celebrate a Gift of Words!
Bring a pre-K book; Bring a treat

Chamber of Commerce Meeting Room on
Church Street

From the President

Last December, we delivered more than 50 books for preschoolers to the Adolescent Parenting Program at CFRC. This year, we look forward to wrapping your gifts of children's books at our Holiday Gathering on Dec. 14, and donating them to Head Start classrooms, through WCCA. We call this celebration, and your generosity, "The Gift of Words."

It got me thinking about all the ways that League members share their gifts of words: outstanding letters to the Editor from members this year on advocacy topics such as Education and Voting Rights; educational programs given by League members on Immigration, Voting Law Changes, Healthcare, Environment, and more; published words in the form of the Voters' Guide, the Sample Ballots, the Kids Voting for Democracy ballots, and the soon-to-be-updated "Know Your Local Government" booklets; and informal words of sharing, updating, and camaraderie at our Brews and Banter gatherings.

On Friday, Dec. 5, you even have an opportunity to bring your words of advocacy, in person, to our local government officials at our 11th Annual Appreciation Breakfast for Elected Officials.

Sharon

Leadership

President Sharon Burlingame
Sburlingame401@gmail.com

Sec'y Linda Weldon
wnclinda@aol.com

Treas. Bill Wilkes
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OBSERVER CORPS

According to Observer Corps members, the recent election impacted only three HC government boards: the HC Board of Commissioners, School Board, and Board of Public Health. Larry Young lost his bid for re-election to William Lapsley on the Board of Commissioners. Young was also the elected delegate from the BOC to the appointed Board of Public Health. The BOC has not named a replacement for him. School board member Melissa Mauer stepped down after serving 16 years. Board members paid tribute to her for her dedicated service. Colby Coren was elected to fill her position.

City Council: Observers Sharon Broussard, Icydor Mohabier, and Madeline Royes

Council endorsed the high school student government associations sponsoring a food & supplies drive for homeless students. Council passed a 60-day moratorium restricting new shelter facilities established in the vicinity of 7th Avenue while sites for shelters needed in other areas can be identified.

Council endorsed submission of a grant request for a city bicycle route-planning grant sponsored by the Blue Ridge Bicycle Club. If the grant is received, Blue Ridge Bicycle Club will assist in raising funds for the city's matching contribution.

HC Planning Board: Observers Becky Armstrong and Rose Griffith

There may be sunshine issues at the HC Planning Board as reported by Observers Armstrong and Griffith. As Leaguers are aware, there is a difference between an adequate notice that meets the letter of the law and a good notice that reaches the entire community involved in the issue. At the September meeting, the Green River-Tuxedo-Zirconia Community Plan Zoning Map Amendments were to be discussed. The room was filled with citizens concerned that not enough notice had been given concerning the zoning

changes that would be affecting them. After the meeting, Rose Griffith reported, "I rode my motorcycle through that area (GRTZ) and noticed numerous signs for that meeting. There were even signs in the most rural parts of those communities." But signs often go unnoticed by citizens, unfortunately. Armstrong reports that the **Board of Commissioners** will hold a second public hearing regarding Rezoning #R-2014-05 (A,B,C) on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at **9:00 a.m.** The notice of this public hearing was again posted on signs and was published in the *Hendersonville Tribune* on Nov. 6 and Nov. 13. The *Hendersonville Tribune* has a smaller circulation base than the *T-N*, so many citizens would miss the notice. Another sunshine issue at the Planning Board is that it is hard to hear the board members. Citizens at the GRTZ meeting had to repeatedly ask the board members to speak into their microphones. Good vs. adequate public notice and being able to hear governmental board members is a sunshine topic that the Observer Corps may wish to address at its March Sunshine meeting.

Board of Health: Observer Linda Weldon

Steve Smith, Health Director, has now completed 6 months in the position. The meeting agenda included the 6 months evaluation of a new employee (health director) and after an executive session the BOH expressed confidence in the new director's performance and support for his continued employment as Health Director. The Board of Health is beginning to consider budget issues for the 2016 fiscal year. A brief review of the Health Department's strategic plan with current activities underway to improve the community's health was presented by the Health Director.

Next meetings for the Observer Corps will be February 12 and the Sunshine Meeting on March 12, at 11:00 at Sol Y Luna in Laurel Park.

VOTER SERVICE

The League of Women Voters of NC is partnering with the Justice Center and the NC Community Health Care Assn. to prepare for grant money to move states to expand Medicaid, and expand in a way that doesn't diminish access or benefits currently offered to beneficiaries. The funders are: Community Catalyst, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and Georgetown Univ. Center for Children and Families. The League's role will be: 1) develop and implement advocacy programs directed to local legislators and community leaders, and 2) educate our local communities on the Medicaid issues and opportunities. Please let Sharon know if you would be interested in engaging in this initiative.
sburlingame401@gmail.com

UPDATE

The Status of the Voting Rights Court Case: Although an injunction was put in place, the Supreme Court overturned it because it was too close to Election Day to make changes. The LWVNC is not discouraged, however. The case is a strong one; it will go forward and be heard in July 2015. In the most recent leadership roundtable call for League members, it was discussed that by including opposition to a photo ID for voters, we have included a complicated issue of possible voter suppression that seems to run against current public opinion, perhaps because it is misunderstood. Nevertheless, the case is strong, and we will follow its progress next summer.

League in Action!



More than 45 members and guests attended our November 20 meeting at the Chamber to hear "It's All About Food - Agriculture and Our Food System." Panelists were Allison Perrett, from ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project), Jere Brittain, from Mills River Partnership, Inc., Craig Mauney, Agriculture Extension, and a pinch-hitter, Paul Schumacher, retired NC State professor, who graciously joined us to relate the perspective of someone currently growing and marketing crops. The panel was knowledgeable, passionate, and most generous with their vast expertise. Some take-aways for League advocacy: we need to educate ourselves about the intersections of agriculture with energy, water quality, health, and other issues. We need to democratize our food system. Technological change is not readily reversible, so advocacy groups need to learn more, and learn what to truly fear vs what might be hype on the internet. Go on farm tours, such as those organized by ASAP, to see the amazing breadth of agriculture in our county. And most importantly, SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL GARDENERS AND SMALL FARM PRODUCERS! Shop at local farmers' markets, get to know your local farmers, and learn where your food comes from - it will reward your family as well as the farmer.



Immigration Committee

Pathways to College Program

The Immigration Network is buzzing with excitement as the collaboration with the Public Schools in Henderson County continues. To date, twenty-two mentors have signed to be trained. Mentor training is scheduled for the second Monday in January, 2015. Training will be conducted at the Historic Johnson Farm, January 12, 3 – 5 PM. It's not too late to sign up to be trained as a mentor. Contact Michele Burnett jmebur11@gmail.com if you are interested and will take the training. All mentors will be fingerprinted and pass the public school protocol checks before they will be able to work one-on-one with students.

Dollars to fund the manuals for the students and mentors will be paid for by contributions from the public school (50% of the cost of these materials), contributions of church groups, students, and private businesses. A minimum of six hundred and fifty dollars will be needed over and above the amount provided by the school district. League's contributions in this collaborative effort are the following: recruit mentors, promote the program through LWVHC newsletter and announcement at meetings, contribute volunteer hours to attend meetings and tabling events. No dollars have been requested of the League's Immigration Committee, The law office of McKinney Perry Coalter has agreed to make copies for this project.

Meanwhile, thirty-eight students representing 12 high schools gathered November 4 to have opportunities to discuss with college students from Warren Wilson College and representatives of the NC College Foundation. Parents of students also had separate sessions. There was so much excitement in the room that evening that the students and parents were lingering long after the presentations were completed.

The Immigration Network will meet Monday, January 23, 7 PM, at the Holy Family Episcopal Church at Mills River. Our goal to keep meetings to one hour - bullying .

LWVHC Calendar 2014-2015

December

- 4 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 5 - Legislative Breakfast - Golden Corral 8 am
- 14 - Holiday Party , 3-5, Chamber
- 15 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30

January

- 8 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 9 - Carrie Chapman Catt Birthday
- 19 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30
- 19 - MLK Breakfast
- 22 - General Meeting - Program Planning 3-5 pm
- 28 - Brews and Banter - 5:30 - 7:30 pm

February

Black History Month
Youth Voter Month

- 5 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 12 - Observer Corps, 11 at Sol y Luna
- 14 - Anniversary of League
- 16 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30
- 16 - President's Day
- 19 - General Meeting - Health Care Update 3-5

March

Women's History Month
Sunshine Month

- 5 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 12 - Observer Corps - 11 at Sol y Luna
- 16 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30
- 16 - Open Government Week
- 19 - General Meeting 3-5 Advocacy Day
League's 95th birthday celebration

April

- 2 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 16 - General Meeting 3-5 Education Study
- 16 - Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 20 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30
- 22 - Earth Day

May

- 7 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 18 - Immigration Committee Mtg 3:30-4:30
- 21 - Annual Meeting
50th Anniversary Celebration of Henderson County
League

June

- 4 - Board Meeting 10-12
- 15 - Immigration Committee 3:30-4:30

NEW MEMBERS

Diane Rhoades – Diane was inspired to join the League to provide support in educating our community about civics, making issues clear, organizing candidate forums, querying the status of development, senior and child care, voting concerns and the status of our democracy. She also appreciates the non-partisan value of the League's work. She loves being a part of a resilient community. Diane has raised worms (vermicomposting) for over 30 years and can relate to the underdog; that part of life that isn't seen, doesn't have a voice, gets classified as "dirt". Diane states that, "Growing vibrant soil, healthy plants, eating them, and sharing the knowledge and the food, is a thrill. Working with other people (LWV) for the well being of community feels like a natural extension."

Brews and Banter

Working? Traveling?
Missing Meetings?
Feeling out of the Loop?

League members, let's get together for an informal gathering. No agenda, just a good chance to catch up on what everyone's been doing.

Next get together - January 28, 2015
Sol y Luna in Laurel Park



REMINDER

This year's holiday gathering will be held on **Sunday, December 14**, at the Chamber of Commerce, from 3-5 pm. We again welcome generous shoppers to bring a "boardbook" suitable for a child 2-5 years old.