

The Voter of ODC



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September General Meeting

How will we be voting in November 2005?

The next General Meeting of the LWV-ODC will be held on September 14, 2005 at the Carolina Club on the UNC campus. Lunch will served—soup, salad and dessert—at noon. The cost is \$20 per person. If you prefer a vegetarian lunch, request it when you make your reservation.

The panel discussion will start at 1 p.m. on

*Election Practices: Past and Present and New
Legislation Impacting Future Elections*

Participants will be the three County Directors of the Board of Elections:

- Carolyn Thomas—Orange County
- Mike Ashe—Durham County
- Dawn Stumpf—Chatham County

If you have friends who are interested in joining the League, this is a good time to invite them for an interesting insight into League activities.

Reservations must be received by September 7. Send a check for \$20, payable to League of Women Voters of Orange/Durham/Chatham (or LWV/ODC) for each person to

Else Bolotin (elsebolo@fusionbb.net)
246 Cedar Club Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Parking is available at the Ramshead Parking Deck for \$1/hour. Bridge access to the Carolina Club is on the third floor of the Deck. Detailed directions to the Carolina Club can be found at <http://www.carolina-club.com>.

Coming in October: Duke Law Professor Paul Carrington talks about changing the Supreme Court.

Upcoming Events

General Meetings

- Sept. 14
Carolina Club
- Oct. 20
Hargraves Center
- Oct. 15
UNA/LWV
Friday Center

See the 2005 election calendar on back page

A Letter from Jan Richmond

President, LWVODC



Over seventy members and guests attended our annual dinner meeting in May. Melanie Sill, managing editor of the Raleigh *News & Observer* delivered a very informative talk on Public Access to Information.

Since May, time has passed very quickly and been used for planning by your Board of Directors. We have scheduled an interesting array of general and quarterly evening meetings. Please consult the LWV calendar provided in this edition (Page 3) and mark your calendar so you don't miss upcoming meetings.

Our first meeting of the fall promises to be a very exciting panel presentation with the Directors of the Boards of Election of each

county. They will be providing local election information that may shock you.

We have developed a new colorful brochure with the help of June Talvitie-Siple. If you need copies, please call Jan Richmond at 408-0444.

A new membership orientation is scheduled for September.

Help Wanted: This is an active organization and we need your help! At this time, we do not have a Voter Service chairperson. This important position is fun, challenging, and is at the heart of the League. If interested, please call Jan Richmond, 408-0444, for more information.

Currently we need many hands to help with voter issues, programs, focus groups, and membership. Each of us joined LWV for special reasons. My own reason was to try and help preserve our basic elements of democracy and express a stronger voice in political decisions on the local, state and national level.

The LWV has made great strides in the past and we need to continue to work to influence decisions impacting our democracy. Each of us has issues which rest very strongly in our minds. These issues may concern zoning, downtown revitalization, education, environment, election laws, Supreme Court decisions, voting machines, local land development, etc?

Make your issues known; please sign a list at our September meeting to lead or be included in an issue focus group. We will have sign up sheets for those people who prefer to do small tasks such as greeting members at meetings, giving out name tags, folding brochures, phone calls, etc.

If you won't be able to attend our general meeting on September 14th, call any Board member to indicate your interest in being included in a group and/or to help with a task. Even if you feel you can't take part in any of the opportunities, please attend the luncheon and learn about local election results and pending legislation.

Scholarships are available to new members who join the LWV. A limited amount of funds will be used to cover membership fees. This fund is available through a special endowment honoring the mother of one of our members. Please spread this information. Requests for scholarships may be made through our membership chair Betty Mutran.

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Orange/DurhamChatham
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Chapel Hill NC 27517-3397
<http://odc.nc.lwvnet.org>

Board of Directors 2005-2006

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408-0444

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806-1410

2nd Vice President

Else Bolotin
259-7095

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542-6696

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919-304-0929

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542-1867

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(Program)
542-1052

Directors 2005-2007

Betty Mutran
(Membership)
490-0470

Anne Bodner
(Chatham Chair)
545-2358

Bessie Carrington
(Voter Editor)
489-8668

UNA/LWV present the People Speak 2005 on October 15

Beverly Hanly

The LWV ODC and the West Triangle Chapter of the United Nations Association joins others across the nation in a joint program, *The People Speak 2005*, on October 15 at the Friday Center from 9-11:30. Our forum will specifically address the problems of hunger, poverty and health as they relate to the U.S.-U.N. relationship. Ray Buchanan, founder and CEO of award winning **Stop Hunger Now**, will serve as a panelist, and several other people have been identified as potential panelists. Several local nonpartisan organizations have joined us as co-sponsors.

The People Speak 2005 program was initiated by the United Nations Foundation to foster dialogue among diverse citizen communities about issues of international importance. The overall topic for 2005 is “**Building A Safer World: Defining the US-UN Relationship in the 21st Century**” with the emphasis chosen by the local organization. This is the third year for the program and our event will be one of hundreds across the country as the UN celebrates its 60th anniversary. More information about the national program can be found at thepeoplespeak.org.

Contact Beverly Hanly at bhanly@aol.com, Carol Sherrod at criis@msn.com or Cynthia Wertz, cynthia_wertz@ncsu.edu if you have questions or would like to work on the program with us.

Calendar 2005-2006

The Board of Directors has established the schedule of meetings for this year. It provides for a mix of day and evening meetings.

September 14	General meeting, Carolina Club	12 noon
October	Candidate forums in each County	TBA
October 15	LWV-UNA, Friday Center	9 a.m.
October 20	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon,
November 17	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon,
December 15	Christmas dinner, Chapel Hill Country Club	TBA
January 19, 2006	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon,
February 16	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon,
March 6	Dinner meeting, Panzanella, Carrboro	6 p.m.
March 16	General meeting, Hargraves Center	10 a.m.-noon
April 20	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon
May 18	General meeting, Hargraves Center, Chapel Hill	10 a.m.-noon
May ??	Annual dinner meeting	TBA
1st Tuesday of each month	Board of Directors meeting	Varies

See last page for the election calendar for 2005

Lobby Corps of LWVNC

Robbie Willmarth



Judie Burke, president of LWVNC, has implemented an action-oriented group of members who actively advocate for passage of legislation supported by the League. The primary focus is on North Carolina legislation. Aided in this pursuit by former co-Presidents Mary Klenz and Peg Chapin, they are presently working on improving communications among League members and legislators. At present there are at least two parts of this group. One group visits the Capitol and our legislators, observing specific committees in session. The other part is the online e-Alert. The Lobby Corps Action Alert will let our NC legislators hear our voices. Those who are unable to visit the Capitol in

person can e-mail their Representatives regarding a pending bill. The annual State League Convention made this a state-wide priority. Every League supported this measure by signing on to the listserv.

Now you ask, "How can I help?" Timeliness is of the essence. When the legislature is in session, you will receive periodic requests for action. You will only be notified about pending votes where the League has a position. Let's have the Orange-Durham-Chatham chapter set an example for the state by our active participation.

If you want to get involved – send an email to RWILLMARTH@NC.RR.COM with your Name; Address, including your nine-digit zip code, and your state Senator and Representative.

Publicity

Robbie Willmarth, our 1st Vice President, is also responsible for all publicity for the LWV-ODC. All matters for press releases should go through Robbie; send your request to her.



Voter Editor changes

June Siple-Talavie, after establishing a new format for the Voter, decided not to continue as Voter Editor. She is giving full attention to her graduate career, along with her family which includes three dogs and at least as many cats. She reiterates, though, that she will still remain active in LWV/ODC. Many thanks for her excellent work and for helping in the transition to a new editor.

Bessie Carrington, Voter Editor

**League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and
Chatham Counties**

**NONPARTISAN POLICY
2005-2006**

This policy is to be reviewed and endorsed or revised at the beginning of each League year and subsequently published in the VOTER.

The League's purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. The LWV is nonpartisan in that it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement.

While the League urges its members to be politically active, certain constraints are necessary in order to maintain the nonpartisanship of the organization. Therefore, the Board of Directors of the LWVODC has established the following guidelines in order to protect the League's nonpartisan reputation:

Board of Directors

The Board has the responsibility to maintain the fact of the nonpartisanship of the organization.

1. Except for the President, First Vice President, and the Voter Service Chairperson, Board members may take an active, visible role in a political campaign or for a non-League Issue, actively participate in fundraising for political purposes, host political functions, or otherwise publicly associate with a candidate's campaign.
2. All Board members may attend political fundraising functions and make contributions.
3. Any Board member, upon resignation from the Board, may run for or hold political office. However, public notices released by the League announcing the resignation of the board member must be carefully worded to avoid the appearance of the League endorsing the resigning board member's candidacy.
4. The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member should be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

When there is doubt as to whether a conflict of interest exists with a Board member's political activity, the matter shall be resolved by a vote of the Board, excluding the person(s) who may have the possible conflict.

Members

Members are encouraged to participate fully in the political process, serve on public boards and commissions, and participate in political activities as individuals without implying or receiving League endorsement. When acting in the public as League representatives, members must not allow partisanship to be discernable. Therefore, to help ensure the Leagues nonpartisanship, the following guidelines apply:

1. League members shall not wear candidate buttons to League functions nor wear a LWV button while campaigning for candidate(s) or non-League issues.
2. No candidate materials shall be distributed at League functions.
3. Only the LWV President and/or her/his designee may present League statements to governmental boards, commissioners or the press.

Since a general policy cannot cover every situation, the Board is empowered to deal with specific cases as they arise.

League Positions

Once League (local, state or national) takes a position on an issue, members may not identify themselves as League members in publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to a League position.

League Roster

The League's roster will not be made available for non-League use.

The Voter...ODC...The Voter...ODC...The Voter

Our Democracy, Our Airwaves

Lynn Kane

On August 4 a **Community Forum to Defend Public Broadcasting** featured a video of Bill Moyers's address to the National Conference for Media Reform in May 2005 and was followed by comments by Rep. David Price and by Jim Goodmon, president and CEO of Capital Broadcasting, and a Board member of Common Cause.

Moyers emphasized that "the quality of democracy and the quality of journalism are deeply entwined...With a free press, it's ok to state the conclusions you're led to by the evidence," just be sure to have confirming evidence and to identify what is editorial comment.

Rep. Price agreed with Moyers' key observation that presenting two opposing points of view may be simply presenting two different spins, not information with a reality-check. Moyers believes journalists tend to talk about only what officials are talking about, when the "news is what's hidden," and all else is "publicity."

After September 11, 2001, Moyers was asked to start a new type of broadcast, which became "NOW" on public television. He invited a wide range of guests and gave them lots of time for discussion, taking pride in judgments that "NOW transcends the typical labels of the political Left or Right." Eventually Moyers editorialized about the consequences of a government with three branches dominated by one political party, and he announced, "The flag belongs to the country, not to the government." He then heard rumors PBS reauthorization would be held up unless "something is done about NOW."

Though Moyers asked to meet with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Board, which is headed by Ken Tomlinson, a conservative, no one has contacted him about meeting. The chairs of the CPB and of the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) are presidential appointees, but the purpose of CPB, PBS, and NPR is to be a shield against government interference in non-commercial public broadcasting.

Bob Phillips, Executive Director of Common Cause NC, cites PBS as "arguably the single largest educational institution in this country." Phillips targets the polls that CPB chair Tomlinson funded with \$10,000 of CPB money to assess "a liberal bias" in PBS. Tomlinson did not get Board approval for the polls and suppressed the results when they showed public satisfaction with PBS neutrality. Common Cause has a petition the public can sign at www.commoncause.org to require CPB full Board approval for all such expenditures. (Media Matters also reports that 16 Senators have asked Tomlinson be removed. See www.mediamatters.org)

Moyers's speech recalled how Pres. Nixon tried to cut public affairs program funds, but then the Republican CPB chair resigned in protest. But Moyers says, "Tomlinson has crossed the line from resisting White House pressure to carrying it out."

Rep. Price described Sen. Tom DeLay thwarted efforts to eliminate advanced funding for public broadcasting which enables program planning. Price talked about the FCC decision to allow further media consolidation, which was overturned by the courts. Moyers notes some current FCC officials are even more contemptuous of opposition to media consolidation than was previous FCC chair Michael Powell. For more about the FCC, see Media and Democracy at <http://www.commoncause.org>.

Jim Goodmon is optimistic about PBS because the funding for digital TV has given UNC 4 digital channels. He predicts coming 24-hour channels on children's education, online courses, arts. About fifteen percent of CPB funds go to PBS. Goodmon says PBS is strong enough to get through because it is part of the quality of life we treasure like public radio.

Goodmon affirms that we all pay taxes to support schools, parks and such that we all do not use all the time. Public broadcasting is part of this quality of life that corporations seek in a locale. He urges us to "get behind PBS digital channels."

Questions started with a Board member of The People's Channel questioning the Ensign/McCain bill S1504 seeking to eliminate all local franchise agreements to open all public airwaves to all media. While sounding egalitarian at face, Goodmon agrees with those who say this will be madness. Municipalities would lose local-access requirements and franchise fees. Currently cable companies pay franchise fees as non-telecommunications operations. But as telephone companies expand into video and Internet communications, perhaps the decision must be to reclassify expanded telephone companies as non-telecommunications operations also, and regulate all such broadband companies similarly.

Follow media consolidation, cable/telecommunications regulation and related issues at www.freepress.net, at www.mediaaccess.org, and at www.MediaChannel.org.

Membership—Renewals Continue!

Betty Mutran



If you see stars on your mailing label, that asterisk means you have not paid your dues. Our membership year runs from July to June. We count on your dues for continuing operations. **Scholarships** are available to new members who join the LWV. A limited amount of funds will be used to cover other membership fees.

In the fall, the LWVODC updates membership information. I encourage those who have not done so to fill out the membership form and return it to LWV-ODC Treasurer, P.O. Box 3397, Chapel Hill, NC 27515. Thanks so much for renewing!

If anything has changed since returning your form, please notify me either through my phone number, 919-490-0470, or through email, lwvodic@yahoo.com. See the form attached.

Currently we have renewals from 82 individual members and 12 households.

*National members who wish to receive **The Voter** need to contact Betty Mutran, 919-490-0470 or email lwvodic@yahoo.com leaving their email address if they wish to receive the voter electronically. National members who wish to receive a hard copy of **The Voter** should send \$10 to LWV-ODC, Treasurer, P.O. Box 3397, Chapel Hill, NC 27515. We will not continue to send **The Voter**. We welcome the national members to join the local league and keep up with local events. Please contact either the treasurer or Betty to make this happen. We look forward to hearing from you.*

New Members

Barbara Terry
1179 Fearington Post
Pittsboro NC 27312
Jimbart1@earthlink.net
542-6554

Myra H. Cain
8 Thorncraft Place
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Durham County,
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919-408-0647

S. Celeste Toombs
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Local Member Changes

Helen D. Pratt
Anne Bodner
Judith R. Shapiro
Dorothy Turner

920 Poor Farm Road, Francestown, NH, 03043
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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

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.

Fall Elections 2005

Municipal elections will be held in Pittsboro, Siler City, Goldston, Durham, Carrboro, Hillsborough and Chapel Hill, as well as Chapel Hill/Carrboro school board. Only Durham will hold a primary election. **Election Day is November 8.** More information can be found at [Orange County](#), [Chatham County](#), or [Durham County](#)

Activity	County	Date
Voter registration deadline	Durham (primary)	September 16
One Stop voting begins	Durham	September 22
Municipal primary	Durham	October 11
Voter registration deadline	Durham (municipal)	October 14
One Stop voting begins	Durham	October 20
Absentee ballot begins	Chatham	October 7
Voter registration deadline	Chatham	October 14
One-stop voting begins	Chatham	October 20
Voter registration deadline	Chapel Hill	October 14
Absentee balloting begins	Chapel Hill	October 7
One Stop voting begins	Chapel Hill	October 14