



## Mark Your Calendar

Off-Shore Drilling Public Meeting - for Monday, March 16 from 3 – 7 pm at the Ramada Inn in Kill Devil Hills. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has scheduled a Dare County public meeting on its proposed 5-year off-shore oil and gas leasing program. Details on page 2.

Wednesday, March 25 – “Empowering Young Women to Meet Today’s Challenges” – panel discussion – Nags Head Elementary School, 7:00 p.m. Open to members and the public.

Wednesday, April 15 – Go-See Tour to the Colored School at Jarvisburg, NC, followed by lunch – 10:30 a.m. Carpooling will be arranged. More details to follow in an email.

May 1-2 – Coastal League Training in Membership, Leadership, Development (MLD) by LWV-NC in Goldsboro. At least 4 Dare members should attend. Scholarships provided by LWV-NC. Carpooling will be arranged. Contact Nancy for details (261-3915 or [Bbirindelli@aol.com](mailto:Bbirindelli@aol.com))

Wednesday, May 6 – Wine and Cheese Reception at Coastal Studies Institute in Skyco on Roanoke Island, followed by a program on “Responding to Sea Level Rise: the Role of Markets and Public Policy” – LWV members only + one guest – 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 16 – voter registration table at the Coastal Gardening Festival – volunteers needed, two-hour shifts - 9:30-2:30. Contact Mary Jane (261-1591 or [mjslesinski@charter.net](mailto:mjslesinski@charter.net))

Friday, May 29 – Annual Meeting – details TBA

June 5 – 7 – LWV-NC Convention at the Marriott at Research Triangle Park, Durham – two scholarships for registration will be available for each local League (\$130.00); room rate is \$89.00 – Dare’s LWV budget has \$600 to pay for convention expenses. If you are interested in attending, contact either Audrey Esposito (261-8052 or [audreyesposito36@gmail.com](mailto:audreyesposito36@gmail.com)) or Nancy Birindelli (261-3915 or [Bbirindelli@aol.com](mailto:Bbirindelli@aol.com)) -- deadline April 30. For convention details from LWV-NC, click <http://www.eventsbot.com/events/eb626261284>

July 8 – Planning Retreat – details TBA

## CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

Hello All,

We are hoping that you are staying warm and that spring is on the way soon! Lin continues to recover from hip surgery, so this is mostly from Mary Jane.

Our March program, "Empowering Young Women to Meet Today's Challenges", will take place on Wednesday, March 25, at the Nags Head Elementary School at 7PM. This program should be of great interest to parents and grandparents of pre-teen and teenage girls, but all persons who have an interest in the problems faced by today's young people are welcome. The panel will consist of a therapist, an educator, a school nurse, and another pediatric health specialist. Please come to this interesting and informative presentation. More details will follow by email.

You may want to mark your calendars now for Wednesday, April 15, 10:30 AM, our annual Go-See Tour. This year we will visit the Colored School in Jarvisburg, NC. Read all about this interesting historical site by clicking on this line:

<http://www.historicjarvisburgcoloredschool.com/>. Lunch will follow. Details to come.

On Wednesday, May 6, 4-6PM, we will again hold our meeting at the Coastal Studies Institute. A wine and cheese reception will be followed by a presentation, "Responding to Sea Level Rise: The role of Markets and Public Policy." The speaker is Andy Keeler, Program Head of Public Policy and Coastal Sustainability. Come see

Our Annual Meeting and luncheon will be held on May 29.

Please plan to join us for all of these events. Remember, March 20<sup>th</sup> is the FIRST DAY OF SPRING! Mary Jane

### **Off-Shore Drilling Public Meeting has been Scheduled!**

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management has scheduled a Dare County public meeting on its proposed 5-year off-shore oil and gas leasing program. It is scheduled for Monday, March 16 from 3 – 7 pm at the Ramada Inn in Kill Devil Hills. This will be an opportunity for you to learn more about the plans and to submit your opinion and thoughts about the potential for drilling off our coast. The meeting will be conducted in an "Open House" format that includes informational stations for you to learn about the process and plans. You may arrive at any time, walk through the stations at your own pace, and have the opportunity to speak one-on-one with BOEM staff. You may also submit written or electronic comments at the meeting, although there will not be an opportunity for formal oral testimony.

Lorelei DiBernardo, Natural Resources Director

## **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PROGRAM**

### **“Empowering Young Women to Meet Today’s Challenges”**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2015 – 7:00 p.m.**

#### **Nags Head Elementary School**

This will be a program for parents, grandparents, and friends of young women providing information and tools to help adults empower their young women for living in the present and the future. A panel format will include presentations from local professionals and time for Q&A. Panel participants will include a school nurse, a therapist/counselor, a doctor or PA, and an educator.

The League Board chose this topic in order to shine a spotlight on girls’ and women’s issues and perhaps impact the lives of girls and their parents. Also, it won’t hurt to attract more young women to our work. So, LWV members, find a parent or two to bring out on March 25! Let people know that we are interested in the present welfare and future of the next generation of “women voters”. For more information, call Marion Midgett at 473-3057.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

We currently have no Nominating Committee, as required in the bylaws. We must have a Nominating Committee and committee chair to recruit Board members to serve from 2015 – 2017. Current Board vacancies include Vice President, Citizens Guide, Electronic Communications, and Health. Citizens Guide and Electronic Communications require a working relationship with your computer. Please, if you have an interest in taking an active role in the Dare LWV, don’t be modest, contact Mary Ellen Hawthorne (480-1062 or [ghaw@charter.net](mailto:ghaw@charter.net)) or Mary Jane (261-1591 or [mjslesinski@charter.net](mailto:mjslesinski@charter.net)) ASAP.

## **SURVEYING THE SCHOOL SCENE**

By Marion W. Midgett, Education Chair

The Dare County Board of Education did not meet in February 2015 due to weather conditions. The following is a bits and pieces report including national, state and local news items.

### **NATIONAL**

- A contributor to the February 24, 2015 PBS News Hour reported that in 1980 one-third of the U.S. adults were high school dropouts. He said that today only 10% are dropouts. (I think this info is worthy of knowing and repeating.)

### **STATE**

- The North Carolina Supreme Court is currently hearing the “education voucher” case and will be deciding the constitutionality of the school voucher program which allows low-income families to apply for and receive up to \$4,000 per year for private school tuition. Wake County Superior Court Judge Robert Hobgood ruled the program unconstitutional in August 2014. The privately run K-12 schools do not have to meet

state curriculum requirements and are not accountable for how moneys are spent. Ninety percent of the over \$4 million paid so far has gone to religious schools.

- Patrick Gannon reported in his column “Today in North Carolina” (*The Coastland Times*, Feb. 3, 2015, page 4A) that as the General Assembly got underway in late January, there was a theme of “restoration” in a number of bills filed. He listed the following which are education related: **Republicans** filed a bill to restore some flexibility to local school districts in determining the start and end dates for the school year to meet education objectives. **Democrats** filed legislation to restore the Teaching Fellows program which has phased out over the past few years. Created in 1986, the program recruited high-achieving high school graduates to become teachers and awarded them college scholarships if they agreed to teach in the state for at least four years. Members of the minority party (Democrats) want to bring back the educational sales tax holiday, when residents could purchase certain school supplies, clothing, and computers free of sales taxes. The holiday was repealed by the General Assembly effective July 1, 2014. Republicans noted that it cost the state \$414 million in tax revenue in 2012, while proponents said it helped parents financially as their children went back to school.
- The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on February 5, 2015 released individual school, district, and statewide performance grades on an A to F scale. Read Mary Helen Goodloe-Murphy’s article in *The Coastland Times*, Tuesday, February 10, 2015 issue (page 1 and 3) for excellent detailed coverage. Commenting on statewide statistics, as reported by the Associated Press and Goodloe-Murphy, state school board chairman, Bill Cobey, said, “Unfortunately what we see in these results is that performance tracks with poverty rates across North Carolina. This problem is not a new problem. It has become systemic and embedded in too many parts of our state and frankly our nation. So it’s a problem that we need to address, and we need to solve.”

#### Dare County

- Dare Schools individual school “report card letter grades and assessment information” can be found in *The Coastland Times*, Tuesday, February 10, 2015 (page 3A). More reporting here should be possible after Superintendent Burgess presents a report to the BOE at a public meeting.
- February is Career and Technical Education Month when CTE courses, staff, and students are recognized nationally, statewide, and countywide. CTE, courses once called vocational or occupational, are taught at all of the middle and high schools in Dare County. High School courses range in the areas referred to as “Career Clusters” or “Career Pathways” in Architecture and Construction, Arts, A/V Technology and Communications, Business Management and Administration, Health Science, Hospitality and Tourism, Human Services, Information Technology, Manufacturing, and Marketing. Middle school courses are exploratory in nature and are offered to students in grades six through eight. Students have the opportunity to earn credentials in several of the classes/career areas as well as essential skills to prepare them for work, college, and a career. (The above information comes directly from a Dare Schools press release.)
- District 5 (at-Large seat), Board of Education member David Oaksmith (a retired U.S. Navy officer) is resigning from the board for health reasons. After his first election in 1998, Mr. Oaksmith served 13 of his 16 years as chairperson; he oversaw the building of

four new schools and major renovations of others - just a part of his years of work for the children of Dare on the board and as a Manteo High math teacher and department chair prior to that. He also served on the Dare Education Foundation committee to obtain funding and subsequently build teacher housing complexes in Kill Devil Hills and Cape Hatteras. DEF will award him its Excellence in Education award at the Board of Education meeting on March 10. Oaksmith's successor will serve for the remainder of his term of office which ends in June 2016.

## **REPORT ON THE PROGRAM ON PERSCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE WITH A FOCUS ON THE ELDERLY** By Nancy Birindelli

Presenter: Tom McGrady, PhD, owner of Sunshine Family Pharmacy in Duck

With forecast reports of very inclement weather, the audience for his program was sparse, but since the message is extremely important, a summary of Tom's remarks is included here.

The elderly are defined as over 60 for purposes of this synopsis. Currently 1 in 8 adults in this age group are abusing prescription drugs; predictions are that by 2030, with the number of Baby Boomers aging into this category, the number increases to 1 in 3. With more than 83% of seniors over 60 taking some form of medication, and with many taking an average of five, the possibilities of problems increases greatly. There can be misuse by not taking the prescribed dosage or taking more; there can be accidental misuse by not understanding instructions; there can be doctor shopping to obtain multiple controlled prescription drugs that are not recorded into a central registry; there can be potential addiction for taking drugs for a long period of time, and there can be street traffic to get meds in the illegal market. Among those under 17, the preferred drugs are marijuana, prescription drugs, and alcohol; among the elderly abuse is by alcohol, prescriptions and illegal drugs. By the way, heroin is cheaper than some controlled prescriptions). Prescription mail order companies further complicate this situation since there is not a good monitoring system as to drug use that a pharmacist can see. If controlled prescription drugs are not taken exactly as prescribed, there can be withdrawal symptoms or other complications that may require other medical intervention. The federal government spends about \$233 million to combat this substance abuse.

Tom recommends that seniors monitor their prescriptions more carefully by keeping them in a locked location in their home. Some drugs are stolen by children or other people with access to their homes. Seniors should record usage on a daily basis, inform all medical professionals of all prescriptions, keep a list of current meds on your person and in your car at all times. They should **ESTABLISH A COMFORTABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PHARMACIST** who can help manage meds and warn of potential side effects and other problems.

If you have meds that are outdated that you no longer take, you should take the containers to Tom, to the Kitty Hawk police or the Dare County sheriff for proper disposal. This will take those drugs out of potential circulation. For further information, please contact Tom at Sunshine Family Pharmacy – 715-0170. And above all **BE CAREFUL AND ALERT** to be safe!!!