



The **VOTER** NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2016

Mark Your Calendar!

- January 20, 2016 LWV Board Meeting, KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10AM (*members welcome*)
- January 26, 2016 **“Wind Power: Land & Sea”**, Pitts Center 7PM. Speaker: J Charles Smith, Executive Director of the Utility Variable Generation Integration Group, will discuss advances in wind power. Open to the Public.
- February 5, 2016 **First Friday Hot Topic Luncheon**, location TBD, Noon
Speaker: Seth Rose, member UNC Carolina College Advising Corps.
Program scope, objectives and how program came to Dare County will be discussed. <http://carolinacollegeadvisingcorps.unc.edu/>
- February 10, 2016 **“Medical Service on the Outer Banks: A Changing Scene”** Baum Center, 2PM; Representatives from Sentara and Vidant Health Care Systems, as well as an independent medical practitioner, will discuss the changing dynamics of medical care in our area. Open to the Public.
- February 17, 2016 LWV Board Meeting, KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10AM (*members welcome*)
- March 4, 2016 **First Friday Hot Topic Luncheon**; Topic & Venue TBD
- March 9, 2016 **“Integrative Medicine”**, Baum Center, 2PM. Speaker: Christina M Bowen, MD, will discuss this holistic approach to medicine.
- April 1, 2016 **First Friday Hot Topic Luncheon**; Topic & Venue TBD
- April 20, 2016 LWV Board Meeting, KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10AM (*members welcome*)
- May 4, 2016 **3rd Annual Wine & Cheese Reception** at CSI, 4PM.
Speaker: Robert McClendon – *Low Impact Development (LID)*
- May 18, 2016 LWV Board Meeting, KDH Town Hall Meeting Rm, 10AM (*members welcome*)

Co-Presidents' Message

Happy New Year 2016!

Thanks to all of the members and the Board, we had a very busy and successful year in 2015. As part of our community services, we distributed almost 6,800 copies of the Citizens Guide and held successful, meaningful, and civil municipal Candidate Forums in all the towns in the Outer Banks. We received many, many compliments on both endeavors. To quote one prominent citizen, "If it weren't for the League, there would be no Forums at all, and voters would not be well informed on the candidates' positions." He went on, as aside, to say that, "When the candidates are presented with questions, as they are in the public Forums, they have no time to 'spin' their answers!"

Most recently, we had a great Holiday Luncheon at the Duck Woods Country Club. Thank you Lorelei and Tony DiBernardo, Nancy Birindelli, Glenda Keel and Carol Butcher for your hard work organizing and conducting the live and silent auctions for the Holiday Luncheon. It was a LOT of fun and we raised a great deal of money that will be put to good use in the coming year.

On January 26th at 7PM in the Pitts Center we are sponsoring an educational program on "Wind Power: Land & Sea." On February 5th at noon we have a First Friday Hot Topic luncheon planned with a speaker addressing Dare County High School graduates and their success rates in college. Later in February we will be planning two Candidate Forums for the School Board election and one Candidate Reception for the Board of Commissioners primary election (Details will be emailed in the next week or 2). In addition, we are planning a program explaining the division of medical services in the OBX into Sentara, Vidant, and independents, and what this means for physicians and consumers. We will be bundling and delivering the Citizens Guide. See details on these events later in this newsletter.

And for your NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: Forget the usual resolutions regarding dieting and getting more exercise..... You look marvelous!!!! Never mind cleaning out closets or the garage..... they will wait! And you may find a use for all that stuff. This year, let's make a meaningful resolution: *Become more active in the League.* Help others to get registered to vote and/or get their voter ID. Help all citizens to become more informed about the candidates and their positions on the issues that are very important to you, personally, and to the community in which we live. There are lots of opportunities for you to volunteer in the articles below. I hope to see each and every one of you participating. Thanks in advance!

Submitted by Mary Jane Slesinski and Lorelei DiBernardo, Co-Presidents

CHECK IT OUT!!!

We have migrated our Dare County LWV website to the national model and we invite you to view the new site! Click here: <http://www.lwvdarenc.org/>

The new website aligns our 'branding' with hundreds of other local Leagues throughout the country, as well as the N.C. and the U.S. League websites. We hope you find it easy to use and full of useful information. Add it to your 'Favorites' list and check it regularly for updates to local programs and activities.

Treasurer's Report

I would like to extend many thanks to you, our members, for your generous support of LWV initiatives this fall. The Belk Charity Sale netted \$543 which is deposited into the operating account to use for educational programming, voter services, and other organizational activities. These sales are not tax deductible; however, hopefully you each had an opportunity to enjoy the big savings that Belk's offers during this event. A great expression of appreciation goes to Sandy Feyrer who attended the early morning event beginning at 6:00 a.m. representing LWV – Dare. The total for the entire year in Belk sales was \$1,066 which is one of our best years ever.

The Holiday Luncheon which includes the silent and live auction was also a tremendous success. There were 55 items in the silent auction which netted a total of \$1,111.00! And the gem of the event was the live auction which added \$1,503.00 more to the day's effort. Many thanks goes to Glenda Keel, Audrey Esposito, Marion Midgett and Geri Sullivan who canvassed the golf clubs, restaurants, hotels, and family venues (such as Island Farm, the Wild Horse Tour, a plane ride, kayak tour, historic places like the Whalehead Club, etc.). There were eleven packages to bid on with each including several of the donated gift certificates in a theme such as the Roanoke Island Package, OBX Brewery Tour, and Take the Weekend Off. Of course the event was only a success due to the extraordinary talents of our Auctioneer Tony DiBernardo! The grand total for the day was \$2,614.00 – THE VERY BEST EVER!!!! Thanks to those who participated – enjoy your package(s) of goodies that have a value that is much higher than the bid price.

The final money raising event of the fall is the solicitation of funds for the printing of the Citizens Guide. That effort is still in process, but the results to date are over \$7,000 – again a new high!!! The printing costs about \$4,000 so some of the remainder of the funds in the tax-deductible account (the Citizens Education Foundation which is administered by LWV – NC) can be used to pay half of the dues to National, voter services activities, and some office expenses.

Since our bank accounts are really healthy, your League will say thank you with the third annual Wine and Cheese event at CSI for members in the spring, and discounted charges for luncheons can be made.

Again, many thanks for your generous support of our League and have a wonderful holiday season!

Submitted by Nancy Birindelli, Treasurer

Wind Power: Land & Sea

January 26th at 7 PM, Pitts Center

J. Charles Smith will provide a current perspective on the economic and technical advances of the past 10 years that have brought wind power to the status of the lowest cost source of clean energy in the country today. In addition to the evolution of the economics and technology of wind plants, the associated environmental and aesthetics issues will be discussed for both on and offshore projects.

This free program is open to the general public, so tell your friends!

News from the State Board (LWVNC)

Happy Holidays! At this special season, we extend appreciation to you for all the hard and meaningful work you and members of your League are doing to make democracy work in North Carolina.

Your state board is excited to share with you plans for an equal partnership between the League of Women Voters of North Carolina and Time Warner Cable in sponsoring the primary election debates and general election debates for the US Senate race, and the NC Gubernatorial race. The US Senate Democratic primary debate will be on Monday, February 29th at 7:00 p.m. and the NC Gubernatorial debate will be Tuesday, March 1st at 7:00 p.m. Both debates will be held at High Point University. MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

We want you and members of your League to be thinking of questions to submit for consideration to ask the candidates. A call for questions with complete information on how to submit them, will come early in the new year. There will be other ways for you and members of your League to be involved as well.

In addition to the debates, TWC is providing the LWVNC with a 30-minute uninterrupted program on voter education that will be shown multiple times and a series of vignettes that will be aired frequently. We will be able to provide more specifics as to times and dates early in the new year. After March 1, 2016, there should be few people in North Carolina and beyond who will not know of the good work of the Leagues in North Carolina. Again, we thank you! Stay tuned!

Submitted by Mary Klenz and Willie Taylor, co-presidents, LWVNC

****At the time letter was written in late November, there were no candidates for a Republican debate.*

First Friday Hot Topic Lunch

February 5, 2016 noon

Our next First Friday Hot Topic Lunch will be held on February 5, 2016, location TBD at noon. (Location information along with reservation instructions will be emailed in a week or two.)

Seth Rose is a member of the UNC Carolina College Advising Corps. The website for the organization is <http://carolinacollegeadvisingcorps.unc.edu/>. Seth will address the following: Program scope and objectives and how this program came to Dare County. He will provide some personal observations and stories to demonstrate their efforts in Dare County. Be sure to invite a friend who might be interested in the topic and/or joining the League.

Observer Corp Report

Board of Elections, December 15, 2015

Members of the Public present: Danny Couch, Rosemarie Doshier; both candidates
Members present: Michele Barnes, Director; Jackie Tillett, Deputy Director; Donna Elms, Chairperson; members Lydia Midgett, Carol Warnecki.

The Board members were introduced and Director Barnes invited visitors to give their names and reason for attending. Board was receptive to having members of the public attend their meeting, since this not usually the case, and encouraged questions from group.

Members of the public did not receive an agenda for the meeting. Director Barnes began by discussing Early Voting dates, times, locations. (Exact information that MJ Slesinski sent to LWV members taken from BOE website).

Barnes did ask when the LWV Citizens Guide would be published and was told late January, early February. Esposito also spoke to the LWV effort in bringing information to the voters via the press and local radio stations.

A question was posed by Rosemarie Doshier regarding the 4 PM closing time. Couldn't it have been extended to assist people who might still be at work at that time? The board discussed how the number of cumulative hours for voting is 204; the same number of hours as in 2012-2014, but with fewer days. The schedule had been approved by the State BOE.

Danny Couch questioned what types of ID would be needed for 2016. Deputy Director, Jackie Tillett indicated the NC VOTER ID poster found at www.VOTERID.NC.GOV. This poster lists all forms of acceptable photo ID which may be used by the voter at the polls. There is also information about getting a free NC Identification Card from the DMV. Voters who are 70 years of age or older may use **any acceptable photo ID** that has been expired for any length of time, provided the photo ID expired after their 70th birthday. (In very small print at the bottom of the poster: **Acceptable documents include a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document.**)

Agenda Item: Calendar 2016 Director Barnes was not sure of exact dates, but a regional training session will be held in January; "training the trainers". There will be multiple day training. Poll workers will be setting up machines, learning how to respond to questions that may be asked, have a "help station" for voters with questions. **Barnes stated "important for diplomacy on Election Day".

Conference—January 31

Intensive Training for BOE Directors on February 1 and 2 in Durham.

Mock election: February 18, 2016.

February 19, 2016 Books Close for Voter Registration 5 PM

February 23, 5 PM Absentee meeting

March 1, 8, 14, 15 2 PM meeting

March 11, 2016 end one stop voting in satellite sites (Baum, Fessenden, and Pitts Centers).

Agenda Item: Supplies. A motion was made and approved to purchase 6 new printers needed for ATV (authorization to vote) forms. Printers will be coordinated with laptops. These printers will be used at the one stop sites or at the office, twice a year. Manns Harbor, Stumpy Point, and East Lake will not have computers. They have not had them in the past.

The open meeting was adjourned at 10:45 AM. Members went again to Executive Session to discuss personnel, poll workers.

Comments from Observer:

Presiding officer had meeting under control

There was adequate discussion of topics

There was time for public comment, and public was encouraged to comment

Visitors were treated with respect

Issues definitely relevant to LWV positions and issues of interest

League action recommended: Voter registration, voter education with regard to NC Voter ID requirements

Submitted by Audrey Esposito

Surveying the School Scene

The Dare County Board of Education met on November 10 and December 8, 2015 for regular sessions. They met at Cape Hatteras Secondary and Manteo High respectively.

Chairperson Sproul began the November meeting with a tribute to District 5 (at large) member David Oaksmith who died on November 7. Mr. Oaksmith served for 17 years, 13 of which as chair. His last meeting was the 2015 October meeting. Dare Schools substantially grew its facilities and curriculum and progressed academically during his years on the board. He was a fierce advocate for the school system and led the Board in fighting for funding during every cycle. He is missed. The highlights of the meetings came in reports from staff, the board attorney, and a closed session. The following briefly covers those.

Study of Student Ticket Prices for Athletic Events. (November)

In response to concern about the \$6.00 entrance charge to events having referees or other officials –e.g. football, basketball, soccer, volleyball-- the secondary supervisor Trip Hobbs conducted a survey of prices and perks within the system. The athletic conference sets the prices. The prices are the same regardless of age or status, except that senior citizens are eligible for a free-entry gold card and school employees are admitted free of charge. There are occasional student promotions by the schools and Project Purple, a student advocacy group, which offer discounts.

The gate receipts cover 2/3 of game costs which include refs/officials, booking agent for refs, security, equipment, uniforms, and travel for playoffs. The other 1/3 comes from the budgeted allocation, booster clubs' donations, etc.

The study's comparison of attendance at regular price events versus reduced priced events (four games over two years) showed no appreciable differences in attendance.

Mr. Hobbs offered the following suggestion to make attendance more affordable: a Family & Friends Pass costing \$40.00 for 12 admissions, providing \$3.33 passes. There would be no limit on pass purchases or use. The Board members were enthusiastic about the suggested plan. One suggested the senior free pass be eliminated.

During the public comment opportunity, which came prior to the report, two Hatteras Island citizens spoke to the issue. The comments addressed the following: the high cost of game attendance, especially for students; the fact that youth stand around outside the fence on game nights; the fact that the speaker pays for some of these "outsiders"; the fact that "little people", including adults, can't afford the price; and one reminded the Board that "I vote".

Instructional Highlights—Report on Carolina College Advising Corps (December)

Seth Rose is one of 45 advisors in 64 schools in 64 counties in North Carolina. He reported on the program and his work which started this year at Cape Hatteras Secondary, Manteo High, and First Flight High where he supplements the efforts of the guidance departments in directing juniors and seniors toward college choices that are a match and fit for the individual. He brought students who gave personal feedback about the program and the individual attention he has provided.

Mr. Rose will be at the February LWV *First Friday Lunch* to tell League members about his initiatives with juniors and seniors. Don't miss it.

Digital Learning—Report on Implementation of Student Laptop Initiative in Grades 6-8

After mandatory orientation for parents and completion of user agreements, laptops will be distributed in mid-January 2016. Parents will pay \$12.50 for insurance (1/2 year).

High school students received their computers in January of 2015. They are being used in all classes. Feedback from the high school experience shows that the user agreement works. There has been appropriate use, low damage rate, and manageable repair rate.

WIFI is available on eight activity busses; two more are to be equipped soon.

Filing the Vacant At-Large Board of Education Seat—Report by Board Attorney (Dec.)

The NC statute says the vacancy must be filled by appointment. There is no mandatory timeline, but Mr. Brian Shaw recommended "sooner rather than later". He reminded that a new member will be elected on March 15 and will take office on July 1. Member discussion brought a decision to meet in special session Tuesday, January 5, 2015 to make an appointment. There seemed to be a consensus that someone other than a candidate should be chosen to serve out the remaining six months of Mr. Oaksmith's term.

Closed Session Decision—Lawsuit (December)

After a closed session with the attorney, the Board decided to authorize their attorneys to file a lawsuit, joining with other school board plaintiffs, against the State of North Carolina, to recover *improper equipment fines* that should have been remitted to the Dare County Board of Education. "These court-assessed fines were diverted to state coffers instead of going to counties to be used exclusively for maintaining public schools as mandated in the state constitution. Dare schools could receive between a quarter and a half million dollars in already collected fines if the legal action is successful." (*The Coastland Times*, December 16, .2015, p. 1) See article for details.

BOE Election Update—One and Done Election on March 15, 2016

The candidate filing period ended on December 21, and there will be competition for two of the BOE seats. The districts and candidates are as follows:

District 1—Bea Basnight (incumbent)

District 2—Ben Sproul (incumbent)

District 4—Carlos A. Babilonia, Buxton; Mary Ellen Balance, Hatteras

District 5—Brandy Foreman, Roanoke Island; David Twiddy, Roanoke Island

See League Election Info handout or Citizens Guide for district designations/ boundaries.

Submitted by Marion W. Midgett, Education Chair

Below is a copy of the Membership Form. Even though you have missed the deadline for listing on the LWV membership rolls, please consider printing the form out for someone who might be interested in joining!



League of Women Voters of Dare County
Membership Renewal Form - 2015-2016

ANNUAL DUES

Individual membership: \$ 50
Household membership: \$ 75
Amount enclosed (checks payable to LWV of Dare) \$ _____

CITIZEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Please consider enclosing a tax deductible contribution to the Citizen Education Foundation (CEF). Contributions provide direct support for citizen education programs and the publication of the annual Dare County Citizens Guide which provides information about government and services to county residents.

Amount enclosed (checks payable to LWV-CEF): \$ _____

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

PLEASE NOTE - IF YOU CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AT ANY TIME DURING THE YEAR, PLEASE LET US KNOW SO WE CAN UPDATE OUR RECORDS AND KEEP YOU INFORMED OF ALL OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

I/we are interested in assisting with: Voter Services_____; Education_____; Health_____; Natural Resources_____; Public Relations_____; Citizens Guide_____

Do you have any interests/talents that you would be willing to share/assist our league?

Please remit to:

League of Women Voters of Dare
PO Box 689
Kitty Hawk, NC 27949