



The Bulletin

League of Women Voters in Henderson County - Since 1966

"The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."

MARCH 2011

MARCH 17TH MEMBERSHIP MEETING HOW LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS IN HENDERSON COUNTY AFFECT US ALL!

**THIS IS NEXT! THURS.
MARCH 17 2:30 – 5:00**
General Membership Meeting
OUTSTANDING SPEAKERS
Chamber of Commerce
at Kanuga and Church

LEAD STORY THIS PAGE

FULL CALENDAR ON LAST PAGE

**THEN MARCH 28, MON.
6:00 -8:30 PM**
A very special
ENVIRONMENTAL educational
experience for ALL League
members, the ECO members, and
the public at large
**LEAGUE PARTNERING WITH
ECO AND BRCC**
Held at BRCC PATTON BLDG.

DETAILS...PAGE 2

A recent Needs Assessment and Market Study highlighted disturbing statistics around the issue of Affordable Housing in Henderson County. **The League of Women Voters and Affordable Housing Coalition are teaming up** to “shed some light” on this subject in a **Public Forum** Thursday, March 17, 2011. We will gain a deeper understanding of how a lack of adequate “workforce” housing affects everyone living in the county.

The forum focus is a subject dear to League. Included in the long history of League’s positions and advocacy for affordable housing, their participation in a HUD project in 1979 enabled local Leagues to promote the entry of women into the mortgage credit market and sparked interest in the problems of single-headed households, displaced homemakers and discrimination against families with children. Passage of the Fair Housing Amendments was a priority for League in 1980; they supported reauthorization of the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act in 1982. From 1989 to 1990, the League advocated for the enforcement of the Fair Housing Amendments Act, endorsed recommendations to Congress to create the Affordable Housing Fund for very low income families...and also urged for the protection of nonprofit organizations that provide the bulk of housing services for the same people in need.

The March 17th Forum will include the history of affordable housing in Henderson County, what is, and is not, being done, and how the public could be involved in building advocacy in this vital part of our community life.

The speakers who will each bring great insight and experience to the subject include: **Anthony Starr**, Planning

Director, HC Planning Dept., **Hoyt Bynum Jr.**, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, and **Patrick Kennedy**, Executive Director of the Housing Assistance Corporation. In addition, **two recipients** of affordable housing will relate their experience of navigating the process and how it has affected their lives.

BE SURE TO ARRIVE AT 2:30 FOR NETWORKING AND REFRESHMENTS... the Program will start promptly at 3:00. Bring a friend to League...this program is a special opportunity. For any further information, please call Iris Vanek, LWV Program lead, 697-0787.

HELPFUL SITES TO KEEP MEMBERS INFORMED AND ADVOCATING 24/7

League of Women Voters of Henderson County - www.lwvhcnc.org

League of Women Voters (National) www.lwv.org

League of Women Voters (North Carolina) www.lwvnc.org

VOTE411.org (non-partisan election and voter information)

Factcheck.org (non-partisan; check accuracy of political ads and allegations)

Contact Legislators:

- internete-mail@ncleg.net (readable by all Legislators)
- ncsenatemembers@ncleg.net (readable by all Senators)
- nchousemembers@ncleg.net (readable by all House Members)

OUR SECOND BIG MARCH EVENT...MONDAY, MARCH 28TH 6:00-8:30

LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES and OUR ROLE IN MEETING THEM

**This is the thrust of an ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATIONAL - ADVOCACY WORKSHOP
CO-SPONSORED BY LEAGUE, ECO, AND BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MEMBERS! COME...BRING A COUPLE OF FRIENDS !!!**

How much knowledge and awareness do each of us in League actually have about the natural resource issues of Henderson County? Do we know the committed individuals and groups who are working tirelessly for protection of our resources? Do we understand that a **key responsibility for Leaguers is to at least have a ‘talking-point relationship’ with respect to our National, State, and local positions on natural resources ?** We think it may be time to take some steps to fill in the gaps in our awareness and participation!

LEAGUE, ECO, AND BRCC are partnering to bring a special educational and participation opportunity to our members, to ECO members and the public...Monday evening, 6-8:30 pm at BRCC Patton 1st floor classroom #150. It’s all about awareness, education and advocacy choices. When we belong to an educational organization, it’s our responsibility to educate ourselves on what we are about!

Our beautiful natural resources in Henderson County are very inviting to developers and other influences of change that might be tempted to disregard the need for protection and wise management in the public interest. The commissioners and planning and zoning boards are very responsible for outcomes of requests and proposals. ECO (Environmental Conservation Organization), is a very visible, thorough, advocate of protection of the ‘big picture’. In the past 46 years of service in HC, League has been involved in developing the Mountain Land Conservancy, in giving input to the Land Development Code and the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Ordinance , and in ongoing promotion of Recycling. In the last 5 years, we have also fostered a partnership with ECO through volunteering with them. We will learn about the four main thrusts of ECO and other organizational resources we have in HC as well as what specifically can ‘one person do’. It’s not the size of the action, it’s the collective action that gets things done. Of course, League will always continue speak to our positions as needed re: proper regulations for steep slope , storm water runoff , recycling, and the Regional Water Authority issue, to name a few. What other needs are there? Where is our energy needed? Let’s get to work! Even an hour a month...a week...we can get it covered together!

**YOU ARE INVITED...ECO MEMBERS ARE INVITED...THE PUBLIC IS INVITED
TO OPEN UP TO THE POSSIBILITIES AND REALITIES ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS
MON. MARCH 28, 6-8:30 PM...AT BRCC PATTON BUILDING 1ST FLOOR- ROOM 150
Questions? Call Nancy at 693-5257....Leaguers, please make a special effort to come! This is for you!**

FROM THE LEADERSHIP...Nancy Glowacki, President

When I come across words of wisdom from minds in the past...I feel “gifted” with their words and grounded again, renewed in purpose, and reawakened to the process of continuing to grow where I am planted. I share some such words here that connected for me. Thoughts inspire and help me see more clearly why I’m in League...or why I choose all avenues of effort that I do . It’s a boost to the energy of my spirit!

“We are all functioning at a small fraction of our capacity to live fully in its total meaning of loving, caring, creating, and adventuring. Consequently, the actualizing of our potential can become the most exciting adventure of our lifetime.” Herbert Otto

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable...Every step toward the goal of justice requires the passionate concern of dedicated individuals...This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1958 (Stride Toward Freedom)

And from our National President, Elizabeth McNamara... “March is Women’s History Month, and the National Women’s History Project is heeding Abigail Adams’s advice to her husband and remembering “the ladies – the prominent as well as the unsung heroes in the struggle for equality. But let us also remember the men – those in elective office who had the courage to cast votes in support of legislation and funding that we hoped would ensure a better future for women and minorities and, therefore, for us all. Let us remember all the heroes because that future is now being threatened in the name of fiscal austerity.

To me, a career public servant, stories of women who chose public jobs, sacrificing money, but not their families, and giving their talents to their communities or women who took advantage of government programs to improve their lives and the lives of their children represent a win-win that is worth celebrating.”

Elizabeth’s words bear relevance to our General Meeting Affordable Housing needs for example, as well as the ongoing struggle for women’s equality with regards to our Constitution for another. Realizing how very long the ‘ongoing’ struggles have been and can be to bring fairness to all, I am grateful for the ‘quotes’ I shared that keep the inner engine going...we need all the positive spark we can muster!

THANKS TO THE MEMBERS ...

...WHO HAVE SUPPORTED LEAGUE’S FIRST ANNUAL FINANCE DRIVE (first in some years) with your additional financial gifts. And if you are still wondering...it’s not to late to give !!!
...Please send to LWVHC Box 2238, Hvl., NC 28793 . LWVHC is grateful for your participation , both personally and financially in this great organization!

LWVHC HAS APPLIED FOR A \$1000.00 GRANT TO STUDY REDISTRICTING 2011-12

Carol Cleveland, Voter Service Chair, is heading up a small committee (Judith Scruggs, Judy Katz, Renee Kumor, Nancy Glowacki) which has filed an application to the State to seek a grant to study redistricting. The **“Redistricting”** study, as proposed, will include activities that will engage and educate the public to learn about this very important process,. It will also include lobbying elected officials on methods of redistricting and calling for methods to establish transparency in producing redistricting plans - all connected to the concept of insuring “one person, one vote,” in accordance with League positions. Members are welcome to contact Carol of your interest in being involved...and we will keep the membership informed about the success of our application .

LWVNC STATE CONVENTION in RALEIGH May 20-22, 2011

Our League is sending two delegates to this convention in May, and other members are encouraged to attend as well! This convention has an all-inclusive conference fee for the weekend for \$130.00 which is excellent ! (there are two additional options for people who live closer and don't need to stay overnight , or who might want to attend for one day only). The main speaker is an expert on "Redistricting" and that in itself is a good reason to go and to learn. When the entire program content arrives, we will keep you informed. In the meantime, think about saying "yes" to this opportunity to see League in action on the State level with local Leagues represented and making decisions together! It's always educational and never dull! It's affordable so close to home...hope you join in! Carpooling and room-sharing will make it even more fun in the college environment of Peace College in Raleigh! Call Nancy 693-5257.

GEARING UP FOR THE APRIL 21st CONSENSUS MEETING: "Do Advisory Committees in Henderson County Promote Transparency/Democracy?" Submitted by Lee Luebbe

Our General Meeting time in April is designated for discussion and exploration of consensus. Do set aside time to read the report and schedule your time April 21, 3-5 PM to attend ! New members , especially, will find the **consensus process to be a unique experience**. Long-time members know that consensus is one of the pillars of League.

The **discussion questions and the executive summary** you find in this Bulletin will whet your appetite to read the **full report ready to read online** (or print if you prefer). Watch for your copy that will be arriving electronically in the next few days. While the entire copy including the Appendix is 50 pages, you may want to print only the body of the report or you may choose to read it online. For those members who are not connected electronically, hard copies will be made and delivered or mailed to you – courtesy of in-kind contributions. In either case, **come prepared to participate in the consensus process at the April 21 meeting.**

Small groups of 8 – 12 will give everyone an opportunity to have his/her voice heard. Facilitators will be Carolyn Schmalz, Renee Kumor, and Lee Luebbe. If there are recommendations to be made, these will be submitted in summary form together with the consensus statements – if consensus is reached. The LWVHC Board will receive the report in May and after its adoption, the final report will be published online for the general public.

To the more than twenty League members who assisted in gathering information from the surveys completed by eighteen advisory committees/boards and especially to the editors, Kathy Baluha and Mary Ann Engel, who finalized the draft form, I send sincere appreciation. You have carried out this local study, learned much about advisory committees, and, in some cases, made new friends. Now it's time to explore consensus. Reserve the date, April 21, and the time, 3-5 PM to be at the Chamber Community Room and participate. This is Civics 101 in practice!

Discussion Questions:

The following discussion guide is provided to assist members and especially facilitators in preparing for the April General Meeting. Be informed about the Freedom of Information Act, the LWVUS positions listed in Representative Government, "Citizens Right to Know"; Ethics Code of Henderson County and the Sunshine Laws of NC. For information review websites: www.lwv.org. - at this site review topics under Open Government, representative Government and an online publication, "Looking for Sunshine: Resource Guide;" www.ncopengov.org – this site is a statewide coalition of which LWVNC is a member.

If you were one of the many League members who participated in the survey work, be prepared to make comments about your observations, i.e., the surveys conducted as well as recommendations to be considered in

a consensus statement to be included in the final report. Whether consensus is reached on one or more areas will depend on whether common ground has been found after all voices participating have been heard.

Facilitators will need to pace their time to make sure all areas are covered in the time allotted.

Ground Rules will be posted so all participants present will be able to participate. **Consensus does not mean unanimity. It means my voice was heard and respected -- "I can live with the position."**

Do Advisory Committees Surveyed Operate in a Transparent Manner?

1. Review the Freedom of Information Act, the Sunshine Laws, and LWVUS positions under Representative Government. See intro above for references.
2. Based on data collected for this report, in your opinion, do advisory committees surveyed (18) comply with the three hallmarks of transparency listed above? Check all below that apply.

- Agendas available online and at the meeting
- Minutes available online
- Meeting schedule, location and time available
- Information found online is accurate, timely
- Consistent use of criteria in appointments
- Open process of recruitment for appointments
- Open process of appointments
- Acoustics and microphones were good so all conversations/discussions from public officials and citizens attending could be easily heard.

3. Are there recommendations to improve the transparency of Advisory Committees?

Do Advisory Committees in Henderson County promote democracy?

1. Discuss the appointment process. Based on the report, in your opinion, is the BOC method for application to signify interest in an advisory board appointment easy to understand, follow and is it well publicized as a citizen opportunity?

_____yes _____no

Recommendations/comments

2. Discuss the value of term limits. Based on our study, of the 18 boards surveyed, 11 have no term limits, while 7 have specific terms of service.

Recommendations/comments

3. Discuss citizen attendance and participation at advisory board meetings.

Are citizen voices respected?

Are public comment periods on each agenda?

Do citizens frequently attend advisory board meetings?

Recommendations/comments

Consensus Questions

1. Is the process of appointment used in Henderson County for seeking qualified citizens to serve on Advisory Boards, open to all citizens to apply, consistently utilized for the appointment to advisory boards included in this study? ___ yes ___ no

Qualify your answer

2. Do citizens who attend advisory board meetings, evaluate these meetings as:

- Open, welcoming
- Participatory
- Worth the time they invested in attending

Use scale below:

- very positive
- somewhat positive
- neutral
- somewhat negative
- very negative

Recommendations/comments

3. To what extent do members of the Advisory Boards interviewed believe their meetings are productive, open for member discussion; open to citizen participation; recommendations valued by BOC? Use scale below.

- very positive
- somewhat positive
- neutral
- somewhat negative
- very negative

Recommendations/Comments:

OBSERVER CORPS MEETING GOES FOR ‘SOUL FOOD’ IN MARCH!

The **Thursday, March 10th meeting** of the Observer Corps will be at **Daddy “D’s” Soul Food Restaurant** at 411 Seventh Avenue. Great collards, Southern mac’n cheese, and iced tea, to mention just a few family recipes, are on the menu of this three-year-old hometown restaurant! There is parking along the streets in front of, on the sides of, and across from the restaurant. There is also parking across from Daddy “D’s” at the yellow Historic Hendersonville Train Depot. We will be meeting from 11:00 – 1:00...bring a friend to League and to the Observer Corps!

Directions: If you’re coming in from I-26, stay right and take the cut off to Lowe’s. Continue driving on the street in front of Lowe’s, which becomes 7th Avenue. Daddy “D’s” is on your right across from the yellow Historic Hendersonville Train Depot. If you’re coming from Hendersonville, drive up Grove Street and turn right on 7th Avenue. Daddy “D’s” is on your left.

The Observer Corps will also be having its **Sunshine Luncheon**, to which all League members are invited to attend, at Daddy “D’s” on Thursday, **April 14th**. Mark your calendar. More details will follow in next month’s bulletin.

School Board Observer News

The school board is holding important workshop meetings on funding the schools in this “Cliff” year, as in “over the...” due to the economic crisis with stimulus funds having run out and the state legislature planning to cut back on education funding. The funding-the-schools workshop meetings will be held at the Mills River Academy.

UPDATE ON THE ERA NC...FEBRUARY Meeting held in Black Mountain

The ERA five (Elaine Martin, Judy Dellera, Martha Sachs, Madeline Royes, Nancy Glowacki) are continuing to attend planning meetings in Black Mountain at Robbie Madden's who is spearheading this 'push'. Feb. 26th was our second ERA planning meeting joining with others to continue laying the groundwork for introducing an ERA resolution to ratify North Carolina as one of the three states needed to finish the job. We are in favor of the three-state strategy rather than the bill being introduced into Congress to 'start over'. We also support another bill that will try to dissolve the threat of terminating ratification because the time extension is theoretically up. During this work session, we laid out some specific goals and built a 'road map' to guide the completion of these goals. Specific tasks were taken up by different people to complete the first phase of research in several areas. We will **meet again April 9** to begin the next step. If you are interested, please...call Nancy 693-5257.

NEXT 'SMART TALK' MEETING MARCH 31ST!

The MRI committee will experiment with expanding the Smart Talk discussion group and hold another lunch meeting Thursday, March 31, 12:30 pm at West First Café (on First St. close to Main St. across from the side of the Historic Courthouse). The lead topic for discussion will be "Civility in Personal Discourse". Please RSVP to Judy Katz, judykatz4625@gmail.com or Rudi Simko, r.simko@morrisbb.net.

BEAUTIFUL BULB BROCHURES ARE AVAILABLE NOW! YES! NOW!

Rose Stone, Coordinator of the Spring Bulb Sale (Fundraiser), has received beautiful brochures and order forms which she will have available at our Meetings on March 17, 28, and April 23 or also by special arrangement! The present deadline for orders is April 30, but Rose is trying to have that extended to the Annual Meeting date of May 14. These bulbs will be delivered in early October for planting before winter.

Members who belong to various Garden Clubs and other groups, will find a very receptive audience who are eager to purchase these high quality bulbs for the spring and summer garden and for gifts! Call Rose at 692-5001 or email her at rose_stone@juno.com. and she'll make sure you get the information you need!

Thanks for nurturing your garden and League at the same time!!!

APRIL...a forward peek at what's coming up! (besides flowers!)

The Bulletin for April will publish the Slate of Officers to be elected at the Annual Meeting and also the Budget for the membership approval May 14 also.

Our April 21st General Meeting for the membership will find us bringing this year's study to a final closure and consensus ...DON'T MISS IT. See pages 4-5-6 of this Bulletin to help you prepare.

The Board meeting will be April 7. We are busy preparing for the Annual Meeting ...our last meeting of the fiscal year! Last year was memorable with almost 80 people present between members and guests. League is now 91 years old...and as young and vital as ever in its endeavors!

PLEASE READ THE MARCH CALENDAR ON THE NEXT PAGE...get to as many activities as possible, bring new people to League, and help us wind up this very productive year on a well-deserved high!

LWVHC CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2011

CELEBRATE!	MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH...explore web sites for events and history. Women's History Projectwww.nwhp.org THE THIRD WEEK IN MARCH IS 'SUNSHINE WEEK'read up on those laws!
MARCH 10 11:00-1:00 OBSERVER CORPS MEETING	At "Daddy D's" for a 'soul food' luncheon while the corps meets! Let Linda know you are coming (and see article on page 6) 697-1045
MARCH 15 TUES. Hillendale School BULLY WORKSHOP 5:30 -6:30 PM	This is a special notice of a special 'happening' for parents at the Hillendale Elementary School by Mrs. Rainer, school counselor. Perhaps some League members interested in this issue might like to attend . Spanish interpreter present also. Reach the school from Rte.225 (Greenville Hwy) turning onto West Blue Ridge Road (traffic light at The Wrinkled Egg or from Spartanburg Hwy (Rte.176) by turning onto Blue Ridge at East Flat Rock United Methodist Church. School phone 697-4782
MARCH 17 THUR. LWVHC GEN. MTG AFFORDABLE HOUSING FORUM 2:30-5:00 PM	Please see the front page and lead article about this VERY IMPORTANT CO-SPONSORED FORUM . EXCELLENT PANEL OF INFORMATION and a great opportunity to share in the creation of meaningful solutions! Iris Vanek, LWV leader , 697-0787.
MARCH 23 WED. DIVERSITY IN ACTION MTG.	Come to the Laurel Town Hall from 3-5 and join this meeting that is shaping up for Interracial Dialogue Forums later this year. For more info, please call Nancy 693-5257.
MARCH 28, MON. 6:00 - 8:30 PM A"BLITZ OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ABOUT Henderson County BRCC - PATTON BLDG. Room 150	LEAGUE, ECO, AND BRCC CO-SPONSOR A <u>SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCE FOR ALL LEAGUE MEMBERS , ECO members and the public.</u> The program will educate us on our LOCAL NATURAL RESOURCE issues and the choices available to us for advocacy and action. Room #150 is on first floor of the Patton Bldg. Included in the participative program will be David Weintraub's new film about "water" , an informative panel on all facets of ECO, an overview of local resources and organizations (including the fast-growing phenomenon known as Transition) , small group discussion, action planning, and more. For more info. Please call Nancy 693-5257
MARCH 28, MON. IMMIGRATION 2 mtgs. Same day	Reg. mtg. at 3:00 pm St. JamesThen Immigration Committee presents again, this time for a special group in Brevard in the evening. For more information, call Lee Luebbe... 694-3710
MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR SATURDAY MAY 14 11:30-1:30 <u>ANNUAL MEETING</u>	Make plans to attend our wonderful ANNUAL LUNCHEON MEETING which will be held at the HENDERSONVILLE COUNTRY CLUB on MAY 14, SATURDAY. This is always a beautiful closure to the year's activities...a fun ,friendly BUT slightly 'competitive' Silent Auction of native plants... mixing and mingling with friends, election of officers, a round table discussion, entertainment and a delectable luncheon. Plan on bringing a friend to introduce to League!