

The Voter of ODC



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Annual Meeting, Wednesday, May 24

Governors Club Ballroom, 6 p.m.

Don't miss the event of the year. The Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 24, at 6 p.m. at the Clubhouse of the Governors Club. The cocktail reception and dinner will be followed by the important Annual Meeting. Our dinner speaker will be Professor Ann Dunbar, Associate Professor in the Department of African and Afro-American Studies at UNC Chapel Hill. Her talk will be "Muslim Women and Political Change: Some Case Studies from Africa South of the Sahara." Prof. Dunbar specializes in African social history with a focus on women, law and women's civic organizations, primarily within Muslim communities. This promises to be an exciting talk and of interest to League members and their guests.

After dinner the Annual Meeting will approve the LWV-ODC positions, program and budget for 2006-2007.

To get to the Governors Club, take Hwy. 15-501 south from Chapel Hill to Mt. Carmel Road and turn left. The Governors Club entrance is 3.5 miles on the right. When you arrive at the security gate, tell the guard you are attending a function at the Clubhouse. The guard will give you directions.

Make your reservations now.

Send your checks for \$25 per person, made out to LWV-ODC, to

Joyce Colaiace
437 Fearington Post
Pittsboro, NC 27312

The deadline for reservations is Friday, May 19.

The Annual Report will be available at the meeting.

Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting
Wednesday, May 24
Governor's Club

Board of Directors finale
June 4

Board of Directors Retreat
July 12

See the 2006 election calendar on page 7

President's Message

Jan Richmond, President LWV-ODC

Each year we are fortunate to have a group of dedicated members who serve on the Board of LWV-ODC. This year has been no exception and we have had an outstanding group which has given hours, services, and monetary commitments to make the LWV active and alive in the community. It is only through you, our members, that the Board can accomplish the tasks it has chosen. I can't begin to name and thank all of you who have contributed to make this a very active year for League activities.

This spring we had four very successful forums under the leadership of Eve Barkley, Voter Service Chair. Our local LWV has never hosted four primary forums and the venues were appropriately selected to include the needs of minority, rural and city dwellers. Eve has formed coalitions with Democracy North Carolina and the Civic and Engagement Task Force at NCCU to help provide diversity. Bessie Carrington linked with the Durham Public Library where a Laws and Order Forum hosted over 75 citizens.

In Chatham County Anne Bodner organized a County Commissioner's forum with over 100 attendees. If you have followed the results of the Chatham County election there were very evident political changes. I think we also had an impact in Durham and Orange Counties in the outcome of the elections by helping to inform voters of their choices in a nonpartisan format.

The Supreme Court Focus Group has submitted a grant for a presentation to be held next fall at the Binkley Baptist Church. This forum will address the pros and cons of Reforming the Supreme Court. Both focus groups have spent considerable time and effort to bring us these timely topics for education and advocacy. Again, without you, the members, doing this work we can not move forward and have an impact locally.

We will continue to attempt to focus on our goals. Please help us in this mission by attending the Annual Dinner on May 24th. At that time we will be voting on Local Positions and Program for next year. This is the slate of nominations:

Officers 2006-2007

President	Jan Richmond
1st Vice President	Bessie Carrington
2nd Vice President	Else Bolotin
Secretary	Carol Sherrod
Treasurer	Barbara Hardison
Nominating Committee Chair	Gay Eddy

Directors (2005-2007)

Joyce Colaiace	Program
Betty Mutran	Membership
Anne Bodner	Chatham Unit

Directors (2006-2008)

Eve Barkley	Voter Service
Cynthia Wertz	Web Master – IT Consultant
Carol Rist	VOTER editor

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Orange/Durham/Chatham
P.O. Box 3397
Chapel Hill NC 27517-3397
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<http://lwvodic.org>

Board of Directors

2005-2006

President

Jan Richmond
408-0444

1st Vice President

Robbie Willmarth
806-1410

2nd Vice President

Else Bolotin
259-7095

Secretary

Cynthia Wertz
542-6696

Treasurer

Barbara Hardison
919-304-0929

Nominating Committee

Judie Burke
542-1701

Directors 2005-2006

Beverly Hanly
(Special Projects)
542-1867

Joyce Colaiace
(Program)
542-1052

Eve Barkley
(Voter Service)
401-1843

Directors 2005-2007

Betty Mutran
(Membership)
490-0470

Anne Bodner
(Chatham Chair)
545-2358

Bessie Carrington
(Voter Editor)
489-8668

Voter Services Report Card for the Spring Primaries

Eve Barkley, Voter Services Chair

The League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and Chatham counties had a very successful April. Committees for each county put on candidate forums that answered the needs of the voters of their counties. In Chatham County, Anne Bodner, organized a Board of County Commissioners candidates forum that was well attended and well publicized, thanks to Cynthia Wertz and suggestions from the Chatham forum committee. The official count for attendees was 125. *See Anne Bodner's report on page 5 for more information.*

In Durham County, Bessie Carrington organized two forums. The League put on a forum for School Board Candidates, hosted at NCCU School of Education Auditorium by the Civic Engagement Task Force, and in partnership with Democracy North Carolina. The NCCU students from the task force helped us with setup of the forum venue and taking questions from the audience. Robbie Willmarth was the moderator, Ann Recesso managed the questions and Carol Rist was the timer. Molly Beacham helped with setting up the venue.

The second forum Bessie organized was in partnership with the Durham County Public Library in their auditorium. This Law and Order forum had candidates for national, state and local seats that were contested in the primary. In addition to the attendees who came to see the candidates, this forum attracted library patrons, who stopped in to see what was happening. Sylvia Kerckhoff was the moderator, Carol Rist handled the questions and Joanna Swanson was the timekeeper.



In Orange County, we decided to hold our forum, in partnership with Democracy North Carolina, in the Superior Court chambers, in Hillsborough. We invited the Board of County Commissioners candidates and had a turnout of 40 attendees who stayed to meet the candidates afterward. Our moderator was Molly Beacham, Else Bolotin handled the questions, Laurie Ferris was the timekeeper and Anne Boyer took questions from the audience.

Throughout this spring, Jan Richmond was instrumental in providing the support needed to make all of these forums a success. Her opening remarks at the beginning of each forum helped define and educate our attendees about the League and why we put on candidate forums. In addition to the sponsoring organization, which helped up defray advertising and facility costs, we have attracted other organizations, who want to partner with us in the future. You will also see Voter Services working with the Membership committee in the future, because forums are a great place to tell more people about the benefits of League membership and involvement. For those who gave their time in making our forums a success, I hope you will take pride in knowing that you are responsible for helping our League become a strong community presence, helping to educate voters on candidate qualities and qualifications. I know that our forums helped to shape the elections and their outcomes, one person at a time.



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County Commissioners speak at March General meeting,

Else Bolotin

Two County Commissioners, Barry Jacobs from Orange County and Mike Cross from Chatham County, spoke passionately about the problems facing their respective counties.

Barry Jacobs said that their diverse board is making a special effort to include all of Orange County, not just Chapel Hill which often predominates. They try to address all people's values. Specifically addressing environmental issues, the Board is committed to environmental progress by adopting goals for the county with a set of principles and a series of standards. They are in the process of acquiring open space and farm land, and at this point have acquired 1500 acres, although there is little or no funding for this project. In partnership with Durham County they developed Little River Park, whose hiking trails and picnic area attracted 32,000 people last year.

They have proceeded from no farm protection to the best laws in North Carolina. At first it was difficult to get farmers to participate, but now thirty-two are on the waiting list. Funding is always a problem and a possible transfer tax for moving is being discussed to fund the schools. Since 1994 three high schools, four middle schools and four elementary schools have been built in Orange County.



Mike Cross

Chatham Commissioner Mike Cross discussed the fact that Chatham County is the largest county in the area, about seven hundred square miles, and suffers from too rapid growth and shortage of money. The three main issues are funding of all new development, impact of a growing Hispanic population and water shortage.

More than 4800 units of homes from \$300-400,000 have been planned; 2% should be affordable housing. There is need for three more schools, twenty-six capital improvement projects, a new hospital and a new library. A new judicial center is opening next year, as well as the library.

A huge problem is access to water. Chatham County does not own its allocation from Jordan lake, even though the lake is within the county. Cary has these rights and other allocations in Wake County. There is also a problem with the sewer system, since the State has to approve that, not the county. The county is so big that there is little connection between eastern Chatham and the more populated areas. The big question seems to be why the Board keeps approving new developments, when there is no structure to support them.

As you can see these speakers gave us a lot to think about and to keep in mind when we plan to study local issues.

Bob Hall, Democracy NC, at General Meeting April 20

Jan Richmond

The Money and Politics focus group hosted a very enlightening presentation by Bob Hall, Democracy North Carolina, at our April meeting. There are many issues of concern for the short session of the Legislature which begins May 9th. Same Day Registration has passed only one committee. Hall stated that if it doesn't pass in this session, it will be introduced again. It is felt that this bill would have a significant impact in registering young voters.

Instant Run Off Voting would enable counties to discontinue the costly run-offs. One will occur in Durham

(Continued on page 5)

Chatham County Commissioner Candidate Forum

Anne Bodner, Chatham County Unit

The Chatham Unit held a forum for candidates for the Chatham County's Board of Commissioners on Tuesday evening, April 4th. Six of the seven candidates attended: District three, George Lucier (D); District four, Karl Ernst (R), Bunkey Morgan (D - incumbent), and Tom Vanderbeck (D); District five: Tommy Emerson (D- incumbent) and Carl E. Thompson (D). Mary Delois Nettles (D), running in District three, canceled just before the start of the forum. There were over a hundred in the audience.

The forum was held in the Superior Court, the picturesque building in Pittsboro's central traffic circle, whose court room was ideal for the forum. Walnut paneling adds dignity to any event.

Joyce Colaiace, Beverly Hanly, Elsie Cunningham and Dorothy Mahan greeted audience arrivals and circulated to collect written questions. Anne Bodner opened the evening and introduced Brenda Rogers, the moderator, who ran the forum very efficiently, keeping it polite and low key. She and the time keeper, Ruth Gerber, held the candidates to their specified time allowances, and the Forum lasted for the planned two hours.

In the first half of the evening, the moderator asked the candidates questions that had been proposed by the Chatham League members arranging the forum. In the second half, the questions were from the audience, selected from written questions submitted during the evening. Since many more questions were submitted than could be asked of the candidates, League members Barbara Kendrick and Nancy Johnson selected representative questions. Most of the questions submitted concerned growth in Chatham County and the possible means to provide enough water and sewage for the county.

The forum was covered by several newspapers and the *News & Observer* had an article on the forum on April 5th. At the League's request, the People's Channel taped the forum and transferred the taped material to CD, which Cynthia Wertz then posted on the League website about a week before the election. This was useful experience and recording our various forums should become standard in the future.

As a result of the May 2 vote, there will be three new Chatham Commissioners. George Lucier will replace the retiring incumbent Carl Oust for District Three. The District Four incumbent, Bunkey Morgan, lost to Tom Vanderbeck, who will run against Republican Karl Ernst in the November election. Carl Thompson will replace incumbent Tommy Emerson for District Five.

General Meeting April 20 (Continued from page 4)



Bob Hall

for NC House District 29 seat. This will cost the tax payers about \$30,000. When no candidate receives 40% plus one vote, a run off election is held. Legislation is being introduced to rank candidates according to a voter's preference to eliminate this costly procedure. It has passed the House and will be addressed in the Senate during this Legislative session. It would also be very helpful for overseas voters who currently have to send two ballots if a run off occurs.

Hall emphasized that public confidence is eroding for our elected government officials. A new source of public financing is needed to replace special interest group money. He continued to stress that we need an independent ethics commission to monitor the lobby reform bill passed last year. We need more and more people saying, "It is rotten." After addressing issues of campaign finance reform there were many questions from the members and guests.

MEMBERSHIP

Betty Mutran, Membership chair

Even as we celebrate the end of a successful year of League activity, we must remind our members that it is also time for renewal—of your annual membership. We hope that you will stay with us and even increase your involvement. Let us know how you would like to participate.

PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES FOR THE NEW FISCAL YEAR TO :

LWV-ODC Treasurer,
P.O. Box 3397,
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

Our fiscal year is July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007. Dues remain unchanged and a membership form can be found at www.lwvodic.org. Dues are \$45 for individuals who receive an electronic copy of the *Voter*; \$55 for individuals who wish a paper copy of the *Voter* via the US mail; \$65 for Households; and \$30 for Full-Time Students (\$30)

The League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and Chatham (LWVODC) contributes \$23.80 to the national organization (LWVUS) for each local member. For the second household member or for a student, the amount transferred is \$11.90. For honorary life members, there is no fee. If a person joins at the national level, we receive only a \$5 local credit. In addition, we contribute \$12 for each member to the state organization (LWVNC). For the second household member or for student members, we contribute \$6. What little is left provides our operating funds.

We welcome additional contributions to the Operating Fund for general LWVODC operating expenses. This contribution is not tax deductible and may be included in your check for dues. We also value contributions to Talvitie Membership Scholarship Fund to sponsor current and new members. This too may be included in your check with your dues and is not tax deductible. You may prefer to give to the Citizen Education Foundation or CEF for educational purposes only. This contribution must be on a separate check made out to CEF and is tax deductible.

Changes in contact information

During the last month, two members have changed their email addresses.

Eleanor Kinnaird's new email address is Ekinnaird@bellsouth.net

Else Bolotin's is now elsebolo@cochill.net

Patricia Vincent has a new address, 2701 Pickett Rd. Apt. 4037, Durham , NC 27705, while her phone number is unchanged.

Citizen's Guide 2006

Nancy Salmon and her helpers have done it again, with style. *The Citizens Guide 2006* directs you to government officials starting with the President and then down to our counties, cities and school systems. In one place, you can find addresses, telephone and fax numbers, as well as e-mail and website addresses. This wonderful resource is used by individuals and organizations throughout the three county area. Copies can be obtained at libraries and many other public venues, such as city and county offices, the Board of Elections, etc. Realtors give it to newcomers to the area.

Nancy's helpers included LWV-ODC members (in no particular order): Lisa Stuckey, Susan Brewer, Yvonne Schmidt, Anne von Amsberg, Barbara Rogers, Margaret Champion, Jan Richmond, Gay Eddy, Jean Joseph, Dorothy Turner, Nattie Trainer, Gwen Griswold, Dorothy Mahan, Elsie Cunningham, Karen Marshall, Beverly Hanly, Mary Ann Gross, Betsy Kraus and Beverly Kawalec. Nancy adds the caveat that she apologizes if she overlooked anyone.

Also special mention should be made of Carolyn Webb and John Flinchum of *The Chapel Hill News* who were responsible for the printing of the Guides, and Brenda Larson, Editor in Chief, for her continued commitment to this project. Financial support came from Gwendolyn Lamb, Orange County, Tony Hill & Associates, Franklyn Street Realty and the Durham County Library.

Distribution of the Guides was engineered by Anne Bodner in Chatham County and in Durham County, by Pat Bocckino and Joanna Swanson.



Barry Jacobs presents issues in Orange County

Election Calendar 2006

Durham 2d primary	May 30
Registration for general election	Closes October 13
One stop voting begins	October 19
One stop voting ends	November 4
General election	November 7

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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.