



The League of Women Voters Is Changing

A challenge to change was the call that came from the recent LWVUS 52nd Convention, and Leagues are asked to follow the refocused national agenda. This month we will look at the structure of the League of Women Voters and how it fulfills the mission of the League as well as how the LWVFA fits into that structure. Also we will examine the ways LWVFA is meeting the challenge to refocus.

[Ed. Note: There was no room in our September issue for all the important news! Please go to the LWVFA website, www.lwv-fairfax.org, to read articles about how domestic violence affects children <http://www.lwv-fairfax.org/DomesticViolence.html>; voter outreach at Alfred St. Church in Alexandria <http://www.lwv-fairfax.org/VoterRegistration.html>; and a summary of the recent LWVUS Convention in Washington, DC <http://www.lwv-fairfax.org/LWVUSConvention.html>.]

Calendar

August 27 Kick-Off, At-Large Unit Briefing

September

- 1-30 Virginia Voter Registration Month**
- 5 Labor Day
Fairfax VOTER deadline
- 6 FCPS school year begins
- 8-14 LWVFA Unit meetings
- 9 LWVNA Board meeting**
- 17 Constitution Day and Citizenship Day
LWV-VA Fall Workshops, Charlottesville
- 19 8th District candidates forum,
Public Access TV
- 23 In-person absentee voting begins
- 21 LWVFA Board meeting**
- 24 Reston Multicultural Festival,
voter registration
- 25 Fairfax Cable Access Corp. election
Northern Virginia Voter Registration
Week begins
- 27 LWVUS National Voter Registration Day
- 30 Reston Community Center election

Inside This Issue

President's Message	2
Awareness of Community Services Board	3
2016-2017 Program	3
County Veterans' Treatment Docket	4
The League of Women Voters	
Is Changing	EF-1
Display League Materials	5
Good News on Court Cases	5
Stay Informed About Virginia Issues	5
Email Protocol Reminders	5
Dues are Due	6
LVA Workshops September 17	6
Green Reads Point Out	
Fragile Ecosystems	6
LWV-VA Workshops Registration Form	7
Unit Meeting Locations	8



President's Message

Wow! It's been a busy summer.

In June, many of us participated in the U.S. League's national convention in Washington, D.C. Many thanks to our five delegates and 19 volunteers! Our presence helped to make this year's convention a success.

In July, we had a productive Board retreat. As we look to the future, our goals will be two-fold: 1) to continue to grow and diversify our membership, and 2) to continue our partnership with other community organizations and neighboring leagues through candidate forums and panel discussions about important issues affecting our community. Bill Thomas has agreed to be our Development Chair and will be exploring various funding sources. It is also time to begin planning for the LWV Centennial Celebration. We welcome creative ideas to celebrate our history and continued service to the voters. At the retreat, we also developed some guidelines to decrease the time we spend on emails. Please see Page 5.

As I am writing this article, we are preparing for our annual Kick Off event on August 27, where we will be discussing this year's new programs and calendar of events. Many thanks to Charleen Deasy, who does such a marvelous job of organizing this event and our units, as well as to Wendy Fox-Grage and Julie Jones. Thank you also to the many people who contributed their time and effort to producing the documents that will guide our way this year.

Of course, the campaign season has been in full swing this summer, marked by attack after attack. Our work is now more important than ever as we face this historic election. To do our part, we plan to hold at least two candidate forums, one for the 8th Congressional District and one for the 10th Congressional District. They will be televised on Fairfax Public Access Television station and live-streamed on the Internet. Since there is no opponent for Representative Connolly in the 11th Congressional District, there will be no 11th District forum. We will post the dates on our website when the candidates confirm their availability. We will again participate in VOTE411 with information about the candidates, the Virginia constitutional amendment and referenda. LWVUS has developed talking points, <http://>

forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/talking-points-first-woman-nominee-president-major-political-party, for League members when asked about the first female presidential candidate in a major party.

Many of you serve our community as election officers. New election officer training is required for those who have not attended training. Training is also required for all returning election officers. Please go to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/eotraining.htm> to see the training schedules and election training materials. There is a great need for election officers this year. Please consider becoming one.

I would like to thank and acknowledge Helen Kelly for serving as our co-president for the past four years. Although Helen will no longer be co-president, I am pleased that she will be serving as our strong and very capable action director and will still be our voice testifying at important meetings.

Welcome to the new Board members, unit leaders, and volunteers. I look forward to working with you as we start this exciting new year.

Peggy

Domestic Violence Hotline
(703) 360-7273

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2016 - 2017

This newsletter, partially funded by the League of Women Voters of Fairfax Area Education Fund, is published 10 times each year from September to June by:

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area
4026-B Hummer Road
Annandale, VA 22003-2403
703-658-9150 (Info/fax/answering machine)
www.lwv-fairfax.org league@lwv-fairfax.org

President: Peggy Knight 703-532-4417
peggy.knight1@verizon.net
Editor: Ron Page 703-690-0908
pagegolfer@cox.net
Content Editor: Liz Brooke 703-281-3380
lizbrooke@cox.net

Subscriptions to the *Fairfax VOTER* are available to non-Fairfax League members for \$15 per annum. Send your check to the above address and request a subscription.

Please e-mail address corrections to the office at league@lwv-fairfax.org or call 703-658-9150

Unit Discussions Raise Awareness of the Community Services Board

The League of Women Voters believes that access to mental health care (U.S.) and support for a comprehensive mental health care system (Va.) are critical services. The May *VOTER* article discussed by our Fairfax units focused on the Fairfax-Fall Church Community Services Board (CSB) and the services it provides for our communities. Eighty members participated in these discussions to learn about the CSB and a program titled “Diversion First.”

The variety and breadth of services surprised many of the members. Several indicated that they were unaware of the organization and had many questions about the operations, including:

- who received services
- how many participants utilize the CSB
- how Board members are appointed
- what kind of feedback they receive
- sources of funding
- how Board services are publicized
- its interface between other governmental agencies and non-governmental groups
- the various locations for services.

Members indicated a number of services and assistance about which they would like to learn more, including

Alzheimer’s/dementia, opioid and alcohol abuse, housing, obtaining services for those in need.

A new County program titled Diversion First was also included in the discussions. Its purpose is to keep mentally ill and drug abusers out of jail. Members felt its goals are an excellent start in changing the way law enforcement deals with individuals who have mental health issues and is also a good effort to impose logic and order in the use of available resources. The program is long overdue and is an excellent first step in addressing issues before incarceration is imposed. Some members voiced the opinion that it is a



waste of money to put people in jail when they really need mental health treatment and/or rehabilitation services.

When asked about attending a Mental Health First Aid Training Session, a number of members indicated interest in attending such a program. They would like to learn more about the training and suggested that our League can help educate the general public if some of our members take the course.

What Is LWVFA Talking About In 2016-17?

<u>Month</u>	<u>Topic Title</u>	<u>Briefing Date</u>
<u>2016</u>		
September	LWV Is Changing-Past /Present/Future	August 27
October	Electoral Process (Electing the President)	Oct. 1
November Sunday, Nov.20	General Meeting at Adarsh Trehan’s home	No Unit meetings
December	Program Planning for LWV-VA & LWNCA (2017-19)	Dec. 3
<u>2017</u>		
January	Do Your Own Thing, <i>Subject to change may have public forum</i>	If briefing: Jan 7
February	LWV-VA Fracking Study <i>Consensus</i> Report due to LWV-VA March 15	Feb. 4
March	Heroin-Opioid Addiction	March 4
April	Annual Meeting – April 22?	No Unit meetings
May	Dillon Rule/ Virginia Potpourri	May 6
June	Do Your Own Thing- with year-end unit activities	If briefing: June 3

Fairfax County Veterans' Treatment Docket

By Mary Jane Cleary, Liaison to FCCIAB

On Feb. 12, 2015, the Fairfax County District Court started a special treatment program for veterans who qualify, the first in Virginia. The program, called the "Veterans Treatment Docket," is described as a "...court-supervised, comprehensive treatment program to help veterans address the issues that led to their contact with the criminal justice system."

During a presentation about the program at the April meeting of the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Advisory Board (FCCJAB), Fairfax County District Court Judge Penney Azcarate described it as a "problem-solving docket," not a court. The program is coordinated through the joint efforts of the Judicial Community, including the judge, an attorney for the Commonwealth, representatives of the Police Department, the Sheriff's Office, and the Parole Office, treatment providers, and veterans.

The veterans who are accepted into the Treatment Docket have problems with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse (75 percent of them), traumatic brain injury, and military sexual trauma. To be eligible to participate in the program the veteran must: have been discharged other than dishonorably from any branch of the U.S. military (only 4 percent of those applying so far), the Reserves or the National Guard; be charged with a misdemeanor or felony-level offense and have the agreement of the prosecutor handling the case; and not have a history of serious or repetitive violence (which history is reviewed by a designated prosecutor and a treatment team).

A District Court representative talks to the attorney representing the veteran before he or she will be accepted into the program, as that person must agree to cooperate with the prosecutor. After acceptance the veteran will be in the program for between 18 and 24 months, under intensive supervision, including being in court twice a month and being subject to a drug screen "regularly." Participants must sign a contract in court with the judge, the Commonwealth's Attorney, and the veteran's attorney. The contract includes the terms for being allowed to participate in the program and the consequences of non-compliance. The latter includes failing to recover from substance abuse. If a veteran successfully completes the program, he/she is eligible to have his/her sentence reduced.

The veterans who are in the program work with a "treatment team" to set goals such as: substance-abuse treatment, returning to school, job-skills training, and securing safe and stable housing. The treatment includes diagnosis of PTSD, mental health, substance use and/or related co-occurring disorders, individual and group counseling, and attendance at self-help meetings. Successful treatment requires "needs that can be met by the program and a willingness to engage in the services provided," according to a pamphlet describing the program. As of May 23, 2016, the County District Court docket had nine participants and the County Circuit Court docket had two participants. Two military veterans were scheduled to graduate during a ceremony May 26, 2016.

The organizations contributing to this effort include the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and partnerships with other public agencies and community-based organizations.

Those in the program are given volunteer mentors, who are also veterans, to help them through the process. A veteran who successfully completes the program's three phases—Orientation/Stabilization, Ongoing Treatment, and Transition/Graduation-- is recognized at a graduation ceremony and may continue with a volunteer mentor after that time. According to Judge Azcarate, one in six veterans have problems and 22 veterans commit suicide per day. In regard to these kinds of programs she told the group the following:

- There are not many programs of this kind in Virginia, though they are supported by the State Supreme Court; the organizations are hoping to eventually get the support of the State Legislature;
- The largest population of veterans in Virginia is in Fairfax County—there were 84,000 as of 2014-- and Virginia has one of the largest populations of veterans in the country; and
- There are 200 courts of this kind in the U.S.

The Docket program is looking for both men and women veterans to serve as mentors. If anyone is interested in considering this, he or she should contact Don Northcutt, Mentor Coordinator, at either 571-232-607 or FairfaxVet@gmail.com. More information may be obtained at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/gdc/veterans-treatment-docket/#>

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS IS CHANGING: Where We've Been, Where We Are Going and LWVFA's Role

By Sherry Zachry, LWVFA Program Director & Kelly M. Stratman, LWVUS staff and LWVFA member

In its 96th year, the League of Women Voters (LWV or League) is committed to change. The clear message emanating from the recent LWVUS 52nd Convention in D.C. is that in order to meet the challenge of staying relevant in 21st century America, we must find ways to successfully engage today's fast-paced, technologically advanced, and more diverse electorate, even if that means changing the way we do things.

As newly elected LWVUS President Chris Carson said in the June 24 "League Update" about the 2016 Convention: "There were key themes of change, focus, engagement and urgency woven into each corner of the weekend." She further states: "We've invited you on a change journey to work with us in telling our collective story and creating our winning plan. That means accelerating the pace of change within the League and having a bias toward action, taking advantage of alternative engagement opportunities, focusing our agenda, and wrestling with the tough questions of whether our current structure and approaches reflect a 21st century organization."

One part of that commitment began with the adoption of the LWVUS Board-recommended program for the 2016-18 biennium, which includes a "League-wide Campaign for Making Democracy Work®." This comprehensive plan for engaging the public was approved by the delegates at Convention and no "not-recommended items" were moved forward. Here is the Proposed Program for 2016-2018 that was adopted unanimously.

LWVUS Proposed Program for 2016-2018

- The LWVUS Board recommends retaining all current LWVUS Positions in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy.
- The LWVUS Board recommends a League-wide Campaign for Making Democracy Work®.
- The LWVUS Board recommends a concurrence with the Redistricting position proposed by the LWVUS Redistricting Task Force.
- The LWVUS Board recommends a concurrence with the Behavioral Health position of the LWV Colorado, including amending the LWVUS Health Care position.

(What is "recommended program"? – we will get to that later in this article.)

LWVUS is urging the local and state Leagues to embrace this campaign, which emphasizes the core issues of democracy and of the League: **voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics, redistricting, and awareness of potential constitutional amendment proposals.** All Leagues are being asked to make this plan their primary focus over the next two years and beyond. *(Note: a fuller explanation of LWVUS Program for 2016-18 will be distributed at the Discussion Leaders' Briefing on August 27.)*

In her June 19 remarks to Convention after being elected, LWVUS President Chris Carlson said:

"To pursue our issues, we must work together with the state and local Leagues, uniting to achieve nationwide goals using state-based strategies, just as Carrie Chapman Catt did with the Winning Plan 100 years ago. Much of the positive change we wish to effect across the country: starts with addressing the laws of fifty different states."

Another change approved by the 2016 Convention was redefining **who** can be a member of the LWV. The LWVUS Bylaws on membership (Article III) were amended to offer full, voting membership to people **at least 16 years of age** and to people who are **not citizens** (the word "citizens" was changed to "persons"). This change emphasizes the League's commitment to proactively reach out to high school students and to those at the margins of society, offering education and guidance about issues and candidates to **all people**, including those soon-to-become voters and soon-to-become citizens. Obviously, the League is uniquely situated, drawing on its 96 years of experience, to educate people about participating in our country's democracy. *(For more information on the LWVUS 2016 Convention, see article elsewhere in this VOTER)*

One thing that is not changing is the League's **bedrock principle of not supporting or endorsing candidates or political parties.** Soon after the League's founding,

the decision was made to take positions on issues but to neither support nor oppose any political party or candidate (appointed or elected) for public office. This policy continues today to ensure that the League's voice is heard above the tumult of party politics.

As part of its work on our core issues, the League must continue its mission to educate the public about candidates and issues. The challenge is to streamline our processes and employ new techniques for engaging the public while keeping our integrity as the premier voter-focused organization in the country.

So, let's look at some of the League structures and processes we've been using since 1920.

A Little History

As you know, the League of Women Voters was "born" on February 14, 1920. It is a direct descendant of the women's suffrage movement in America—which "officially" began in July, 1848, at Seneca Falls, New York. At that time, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, along with others (mostly Quakers), organized the Seneca Falls Convention which advertised itself as the first women's rights convention. "Woman" suffrage in the United States emerged from the abolitionist and temperance movements in the early 1800s before becoming its own movement with multiple organizations pursuing various strategies to gain the vote.

After the Civil War, the suffrage movement gained momentum. One of the organizations, founded by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton in 1869 was the National Women's Suffrage Association (NWSA) whose purpose was to secure women's enfranchisement through a federal constitutional amendment. In 1890, the NWSA and AWSA (American Woman's Suffrage Association that was pursuing suffrage through state-by-state campaigns) merged to form the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

Carrie Chapman Catt followed Susan B. Anthony as the president of NAWSA in 1900; she served four years, took a break from leadership because of her ill husband, and then returned to her presidency in 1915. After resuming leadership of NAWSA, Catt shepherded a comprehensive plan to pursue suffrage state by state while also working for a constitutional amendment. In February, 1920, Catt dissolved NAWSA after the 19th Amendment had been passed (but not yet ratified) and founded the League of Women Voters at the convention in Chicago, IL. Catt formed the LWV for the

purpose of encouraging women to use their hard-won right to vote to learn about the electoral process, candidates and issues. In 1973, the League changed its charter to accept men as members.

How Are Leagues Organized?

In the United States, the needs of individuals are served by national, state, regional and local levels of government. These levels of government are separate but interdependent. The League of Women Voters is similarly organized. Each level of the League, which is governed by its own elected volunteer board, interacts with its corresponding level of government.

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS), headquartered in Washington, D.C., addresses concerns at the federal government level and presidential elections. The League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWV-VA), comprised of local Leagues and Members-At-Large Units within Virginia, addresses concerns at the state government level and statewide elections. Our local League, the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) focuses on Fairfax County and the city and towns that fall within its boundaries - Fairfax City, Towns of Clifton, Herndon and Vienna - and covers the elections of officials for all of those entities.

In the area around Washington, D.C., there is a fourth League level called an Inter-League Organization (ILO), which is a regional League comprised of individual local and state Leagues around and including D. C. The LWV of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA) is made up of the LWV of the District of Columbia; the LWV of Virginia and the Leagues of Arlington, Fairfax Area, Falls Church [City] and Loudoun County; as well as the LWV of Maryland and Leagues of Howard, Prince Georges, and Montgomery Counties. LWVNCA address issues that cross the jurisdictional lines of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, such as transportation and environmental-quality issues. Local Leagues in the region **choose** to join the LWVNCA (and pay PMP to LWVNCA).

Membership in LWVFA results in simultaneous membership in all League levels. A portion of a member's dues is sent to each League level above the local level; this is called PMP (per-member-payment); these payments are used for activities sponsored by the other League levels. Only a small percentage of a local member's dues remains with LWVFA; so LWVFA activities are primarily supported through fundraising.

What Are Units, MAL Members and the LWVFA Difference?

LWVFA is different from most local Leagues in Virginia in that it is divided into “units” that generally form in various geographical areas of the larger League. Many LWVFA members meet in neighborhood units throughout the Fairfax Area. People can choose unit meetings at a time and location convenient to them (no one is “assigned” to a unit), and if they attend the respective unit meeting regularly, they are considered a member of that unit. Generally, there is a monthly topic to be discussed by all of the units in LWVFA, which allows a person to attend any unit meeting and engage in the same discussion topic.

LWVFA currently has ten units; the names and meeting times of the units are listed in the *Fairfax VOTER* on the inside back cover. However, not all LWVFA members choose to belong to a unit; those members are called “unaffiliated members” (UAM). They are encouraged to attend the “At-Large Unit” meeting, held on the first Saturday of the month at the LWVFA office. This meeting is designated a discussion leaders’ briefing for the monthly topic, but anyone can attend and all are encouraged to do so; all League meetings are public (including the Board meeting).

As stated before, not all Leagues have units. Many Leagues have all-member meetings that are organized around a special event or discussion topic. Each League organizes its meetings to suit the individual goals and needs of its members and community. LWVFA units usually do not meet in a month with an all-member event like a general meeting or annual meeting.

There is another type of unit called a Members-At-Large (MAL) unit. MAL Units are part of the state League and are governed by state League bylaws and processes. A person may join the LWV-VA as a member-at-large when there is no local League in their area or if they do not want to join a local League. If enough people are members-at-large in the same geographic area of the state, the state League can confer recognition as an MAL Unit; its structure mimics the LWVFA unit structure with unit chair, unit membership chair, unit voter service chair, etc. A new MAL Unit recently recognized by LWV-VA is the Fredericksburg MAL Unit of LWV-VA.

Issues and League “Program”—What Is “League Program”?

In the League, the word “program” has a special meaning. The “classic” meaning is described in the January 21, 2015, LWVUS Webinar, *League Program 101*, as follows:

League Program includes the process by

which positions are adopted (program planning).

The three parts of program adoption include: 1) The **selection** of an issue (program planning); 2) The **study** of that issue, consensus and formulating a position; and 3) The **use** of that position to influence public policy.

League Program also refers to the **positions** the League uses to affect public policy. Therefore, **Program** consists of those governmental issues that the League has chosen for concerted **study and action** at the national, [regional], state and local level; **“Program is the League’s reason for being.”**

(League positions, consensus and concurrence, advocacy action are explained later in this article)

Leagues at all levels can choose a policy issue (at their governmental level) that they want to investigate or study in an unbiased manner. **The goal of any study is to develop positions from which the League can advocate or take action.** The method for choosing the topic or policy issue is called “program planning” and involves League members suggesting topics they wish to study or re-study and/or choosing which current positions they want to emphasize through advocacy or action for the next two years (an adopted program could include all three, but does not have to do so).

Members’ feedback is compiled by the respective League boards (local, state, regional or national) who then propose a “recommended program” (based on that feedback) to the respective convention or annual meeting. Items suggested by members, units or Leagues that were **not recommended** by the board can also be considered at the convention or annual meeting if correct procedures are followed. Topics and issues selected for study and action and adopted by the delegates at annual meetings and conventions are called the “LWV Program” for the next biennium. The specific processes governing program planning and program adoption are outlined in the bylaws of all Leagues. In the LWVFA [General Fund] Bylaws, Program is Article VIII.

LWVFA will be conducting “program planning” in December this year for the LWV-VA and the LWV-VA 2017-2019 biennium. There will be further explanation of program and program planning to guide LWVFA members and units in the December 2016 *Fairfax VOTER*

Another meaning for program in LWVFA

In LWVFA there is a kind of program that is considered “**informational only.**” Information topics do not have to be approved or adopted at an annual meeting or lead to a consensus or concurrence. As you know, LWVFA units generally meet eight months in a League year (July 1 through June 30). Obviously, we do not conduct a consensus or concurrence every month.

Traditionally, LWVFA units expect to have a topic to discuss each month, with background material and discussion questions published in the *Fairfax VOTER* for that month. Therefore, the LWVFA Board, with guidance from the Program Director, selects additional topics to be **informational studies** (or “programs”) designed to enlighten members about a particular topic, but these discussions do not involve taking consensus. Usually suggestions for informational topics come from the members.

The informational program topics are scheduled based on the amount of interest and availability of people to work on the topic for that month. Once approved by the LWVFA Board, the schedule of monthly topics becomes the “LWVFA program-year” **Calendar** for the units and for LWVFA as a whole. Included in the calendar are the months that a general meeting and annual meeting (usually in April) are scheduled. Consensus studies are also included and assigned a month that meets the deadline for feedback; see the LWVFA 2016-17 Unit Topics Calendar. If there is enough interest in the subject, an informational topic can lead to being selected for a League consensus study at a later date.

Additional events like a public seminar or panel discussion on a “burning issue” in the community can also be scheduled and sometimes will overlap with the monthly unit discussion topics. All of the foregoing can be called programs, so we must be careful to understand what the purpose of the program is—inform, educate or lead to a position for action.

League Positions – What Are They And How Are They Developed?

As stated earlier, “League Program” includes positions and the process by which they are adopted. The purpose of having a League position is to **use that position** to influence public policy. All League positions result from thorough research on a selected topic that is presented to the members in an unbiased manner. Members are asked to give feedback on questions about the topic through a process called consensus (or concurrence) where, if there is enough member agreement on answers to the questions, a series of statements can be formulated about that topic.

Those statements about the topic are called a “**position.**” Once a League board approves the wording of the position, it can be used by that League for advocacy and action. The entire position is adopted by the membership at the next respective Convention or Annual Meeting.

League Principles accompany positions and are usually printed somewhere in the position booklet. The Principles (which come from LWVUS) govern what the League does and apply to every position. According to the LWVUS Bylaws, Principles serve two functions: 1) authorization for adoption of national, state and local program (Article XII), and 2) a basis for taking action at the national, state and local levels (Article XII). You can find them in LWVUS *Impact on Issues*, or LWVFA *Here We Stand*.

All of an individual League’s positions are published in a booklet or pamphlet that includes the entire wording of that League’s positions, with the history of each position and the process used to arrive at that position (consensus or concurrence). Sometimes, positions must be updated or restudied in light of legislation or events that occur after the wording was first adopted. When that happens, it will be noted in the history with the date(s) the changes were made. On rare occasions, a position may no longer be relevant because the goals have been accomplished. When that happens, a position may be recommended to be deleted. A brief version of each position is called a “position-in-brief” (PiB) and is also included in the booklet and sometimes in a separate document.

The LWVUS positions fall into the categories of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy; they are statements on policy issues that affect the entire nation and are published in *Impact on Issues*. The brief statement version is called “LWVUS Summary of Public Policy Positions. LWV-VA’s full positions are published in *LWV-VA Positioned for Action*; the brief version is “LWV-VA Positions in Brief.” LWVFA’s full positions with history are published in *Here We Stand*; the brief statements are also called “LWVFA Positions in Brief. The LWV-VA and LWVFA positions are organized into the same categories as LWVUS, except for International Relations. The LWVNCA also has positions that cover regional issues but they are not organized into categories. All of these documents are posted on the respective League’s websites and can be accessed through the LWVFA website, www.lwv-fairfax.org .

It is important to note that a local League can use any of the positions developed by other levels of League (LWV-VA,

LWVNCA and LWVUS) to address a local issue; in other words, a local League does not need to study and form a position on a policy issue or topic when the LWVUS or LWV-VA (or LWVNCA) already has a position on that issue. When a state or local League adopts a position that addresses an issue specific to its state or jurisdiction, that position cannot conflict with or contradict the LWVUS positions.

In order to remain on the program of issues for possible action, a League's positions must be re-adopted by the membership every two years and recommendations to do so are part of the respective League's "recommended program" at convention or annual meeting. If members want to update, restudy or eliminate a position, those decisions also become part of a League's program if they are adopted by the membership.

How Are League Positions Developed?

From the January 21, 2015, LWVUS *League 101* Webinar—There are **three ways** policy positions are adopted:

- 1) New Study [Consensus]—Generally done when the issue around which the position to be developed has not been considered by the League. Examples: Immigration Study, 2006; Privatization Study, 2011
- 2) Concurrence—Used when the national League adopts the position of a state, local League or task force (*Note: A Task Force concurrence on Redistricting was adopted at 2016 LWVUS Convention*) Examples: Redistricting Concurrence, 2016; Human Trafficking, 2014. State and local Leagues can also adopt positions of other state and local Leagues.
- 3) Review and Update—When the League revisits a position to include additional facets of that topic. Examples: Agriculture Update, 2013; International Trade, 2002

Definitions:

Consensus is agreement among a substantial number, **not just a simple majority**, of members, reached after study and group discussion. It is the "sense of the meeting." Consensus does not require unanimity. The presence of disagreement may be noted as a minority opinion, but this does not imply taking a vote.

Concurrence is the act of agreeing with, or concurring with, a position reached by another League, or study committee, task force, or board. Concurrence is achieved by member agreement with the existing position statement.

Forming League Positions Through Consensus or Concurrence (LWVFA specific)

Once a program item (for study or re-study) is adopted at an

annual meeting or convention, a program study committee/team made up of interested members is organized to study the topic selected. This group is responsible for pulling the information together and examining all sides of the issue so that the information presented to members will be balanced and objective.

The study committee/team devises consensus questions for discussion and feedback at the unit meetings or all-member meeting. Members' answers to the questions are recorded on a consensus feedback report form. The program team/committee, after considering the consensus or concurrence reports, proposes the exact wording of the position, in broad terms, to the LWVFA Board.

Determining whether consensus has been achieved and how it should be expressed is the responsibility of the board. Once a League board has finalized a position on an issue, the board can begin taking action on it immediately. The position is announced to members and can be shared with the public and becomes part of the League's position statements (*Here We Stand, Positioned for Action or Impact on Issues*).

In 2017, LWVFA will participate in a consensus on "Fracking in Virginia" at our February unit meetings. This study came from the LWV-VA Program for 2015-2017, adopted at the 2015 LWV-VA Convention.

Using Concurrence to Form a Position

Using the concurrence process to formulate a position is a faster way to come to agreement. As stated above, concurrence is using a position statement from another League, an *ad hoc* Task Force appointed for that purpose, a study committee, or from a League board. It differs from a consensus-formed position in that members do not have direct input to the *exact* wording of the position to be adopted by concurrence; they either accept or not accept the position in total. Research and study also undergird concurrence statements—either performed by the original League or by the task force or committee designated to adapt the statement to the respective League.

Leagues are being encouraged to use the concurrence process, if at all possible, to form positions because it is a speedier process—concurrences generally are a one-year process, rather than a consensus study, which usually takes two years to complete (from selection of the topic to producing a position). Two of the new LWVUS positions adopted by the 2016 Convention were concurrences (Redistricting and Behavioral Health).

Using League Positions for Advocacy and Action:

Advocacy and Action are the third leg of “League Program.” In fact, action is why the League has positions—they give us the “authority” to speak about an issue to our legislators and the public. In League terms, “Action” is the word used to describe the League’s attempts to influence public policy at all levels of government. Note that part of the *change* of the 2016-18 LWVUS Program is a “bias toward action.” In other words, we may have studied enough issues; so let’s take action in our communities!

Once a position is established, action encompasses everything that is done, through the political process, using League positions to support or oppose government policies. It may include providing information to the public and building public opinion, lobbying, testifying at public hearings, issuing media releases, writing (or Emailing) letters to editors and elected officials, or even marching on “city hall.”

“Speaking with one voice” is one of the most important tenets of the League. The LWVUS Bylaws provide that Leagues may act on national legislative issues only in conformity with positions taken by the LWVUS (see *Impact on Issues*). Interpretation of League positions is the responsibility of the board that oversees that position and deciding to use a position for action is also a board function. Uniform interpretation is necessary and helps to ensure that the League speaks with one voice at all levels of government, which is essential for our effectiveness as an advocacy organization.

What Is the Difference Between Advocacy and Lobbying?

League **advocacy** flows from League positions and involves concerted efforts to influence and achieve public policies consistent with those positions. Advocacy is a broader concept than lobbying. While lobbying can be part of an advocacy strategy, advocacy does not necessarily include lobbying. **Lobbying** is defined as an attempt to influence **specific legislation**, both legislation that has already been introduced in a legislative body and **specific legislative proposals** that the League or others may either oppose or support. Lobbying includes action that transmits a point of view to elected officials or their staffs on a specific piece of legislation, as well as action urging the public to contact their legislators about a specific piece of legislation.

Lobbying activities **must be funded** from general operating funds [501(c)4]. On the other hand, advocacy activities based on positions can sometimes be funded with tax-deductible monies [501(c)3]. This is the case even when

only one side of an issue is presented, as long as no call to action on a particular piece of legislation is issued. Such advocacy activities can include: 1) developing public policy briefs that analyze issues and provide detailed information and recommendations for addressing them through specific reforms, and 2) providing forums for discussing issues and educating policymakers and the public.

League members are encouraged to contact their legislators **as individuals** regarding League priority issues such as in a League “Action Alert” (i.e., they should not mention that they are League members in their communications). It is important to remember that **only the League president (or designee) speaks in the name of the League**. And the president can speak publicly only about issues on which the League has a position after board approval to do so.

Lobbying activities and voter service activities must be kept completely separate, and voters’ guides and other voter service materials and publications must not contain statements of League positions.

Speaking of Voter Service - Voter Service in League & LWVFA

The League’s voter service activities are designed to provide citizens with unbiased, factual information that can be used as a basis for understanding the election process and reaching their own voting decisions. Leagues, including LWVFA, carry out a variety of election-related services, which may include:

- Making registration and voting information available through a variety of means, including a Website and www.VOTE411.org.
- Organizing voter registration and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaigns that target groups that have traditionally not participated in elections.
- Publishing voters’ guides/candidate questionnaires, including in VOTE411.
- Sponsoring candidate meetings, debates and interviews.
- Providing speakers on election issues, such as voting procedures and ballot measures (on which the League has no position).

As mentioned earlier, the local League covers issues and elections specific to its incorporated area. For example, LWVFA has parts of three congressional districts (8th, 10th & 11th), nine state senatorial districts, and 17 state delegate districts within its area, in addition to the elections for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Sheriff and Commonwealth Attorney, Fairfax County and Fairfax City School Boards, City and Town Mayors and Councils. All

of these offices and more are included in LWVFA's annual Directory of Public Officials & Government Offices—*Facts for Voters*.

In addition, LWVFA produces “What’s on the Ballot” (WOTB) every election year, and in Virginia that is *every year!* WOTB lists election information and all the candidates running for elected office that year (within LWVFA’s boundaries), along with any ballot issues such as local referenda or amendments to the Virginia Constitution. In the election cycle when all the local government offices and the entire General Assembly is up for election, the WOTB is four pages and can have 100 or more candidates listed.

Looking forward

You may have noted that many of the activities included in the LWVUS adopted program for 2016-18 are the priorities of the LWVFA – part of our efforts to impact our community and our democracy. While we are already embracing many of the tenets of the Making Democracy Work() campaign, we have an opportunity to think about how we can do that in new and different ways. How do we engage new individuals and have greater impact with our work? All of us can have a role in answering this during this election season and beyond.

As the LWVUS CEO Wylecia H. Harris concluded in her speech to the delegates at the 2016 Convention:

This Convention represents the start of the clock for us to redesign our organization within the next 18-24 months, to identify and begin executing a Winning Plan. When we assemble in Chicago in two years, we should be prepared to take the actions necessary to position us for greater success. And, when we journey back to DC in 2020, we should be celebrating our successes and fine tuning our strategies.

So, what am I asking for today? I'm asking that we all be open to continued conversation and that we recognize the urgency of this change journey. I'm asking us to realize the need for a framework as a starting point in this conversation, and that we be mindful of any biases we may have that could hinder our success. Finally, I'm asking us to adopt the Making Democracy Work® campaign, which will provide us the organizational focus and strategic alignment necessary to demonstrate greater collective impact, relevance and visibility. This is the beginning of our Winning Plan.

If we work together to embrace change, we can pick up the mantle of those who came before us. We can bring the League of Women Voters into its second century as strong as it has ever been, prepared to “finish the fights” of this generation, and for generations to come.

As newscasters say: “Stay tuned for further developments.”

Sources:

IMPACT ON ON ISSUES 2014-2016 (<http://lww.org/content/impact-issues>)

LEAGUE BASICS, 2009 (http://lww.org/files/League_Basics.pdf)

LEAGUE PROGRAM 101- Webinar (<http://forum.lww.org/member-resources/article/league-program-101>)

LWVUS MANAGEMENT SITE

(<http://forum.lww.org/category/member-resources/council-and-convention/convention-2016>)

Dr. Harris & President Chris Carlson’s remarks to Convention, LWVUS Recommended Program)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrie_Chapman_Catt

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seneca_Falls_Convention

LWVFA Information for the New League Member

http://www.lww-fairfax.org/files/Information_for_the_New_League_Members_2015.pdf

LWVFA website: www.lww-fairfax.org

THE LEAGUE UPDATE June 24, 2016

Discussion Questions

1. Who was the first LWV President?
2. How many levels of League are there in the area around Washington, D.C.? Name them.
3. How is LWVFA different from other Northern VA Leagues and most of the Leagues in Virginia?
4. What is League Program (the components of League Program)?
5. What is the difference between consensus and concurrence?
6. What is a League position? How is it used?
7. What is the difference between taking action by lobbying and by advocacy? How does an individual member take action?
8. What changes were made at the LWVUS 2016 Convention?
9. How do you see LWVFA further implementing the League-wide Making Democracy Work® campaign? Name two new possibilities (voter service activities).
10. Did you learn anything new about LWVFA or the League in general? What more, if anything, do you want to know about the League or LWVFA in particular?

Display League Materials at Nonprofit Organizations

Please take a literature display box with you if you often go to a charity shop, a food bank, a clinic, or a neighborhood service agency. Ask if you can leave the box on a counter or shelf. Whenever you go, please check the box and replace items as needed. There will be supplies in your unit bags, our office in the Packard Center, in the Government Center, and in local libraries.



If you have an opportunity, talk with the staff and clients about being registered and checking their voter registrations to make sure they are registered at their current addresses. If an opportunity opens up, please offer to help with voter registration there. If you need anything, please contact Sidney at sidneyjohnson3@verizon.net or 703-476-0581.

Stay Informed on Virginia Issues!

In January, LWV-VA changed some of its communication methods. It has replaced the Virginia *Voter* with an emailed newsletter. This **Voter Express** is sent more frequently, resulting in more up-to-date information. Recently, it came to the state board's attention that many of us have not been receiving the **Voter Express**.

Some email servers have been automatically deleting the **Voter Express** before it even gets to the Spam folder. To prevent that from happening and ensure that you receive important information from LWV-VA, please put the following entries into your email contact list:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Voter Express	communications@lww-va.org
VA Express	president@lww-va.org

Because these emails come through a mass mailing program called MailChimp, we are advised not to unsubscribe to anything that says MailChimp. Unsubscribing will result in being shut off from state League news by MailChimp **not** LWV-VA. Copies of all the newsletters you may have missed are on the LWV-VA website: [Virginia Voter Express](#)

Good News on Court Cases Reported From LWVUS

July 20 at 3:05pm · After years of voter suppression attacks in Wisconsin, voters got a big victory this week! In 2011 the ACLU brought a lawsuit against the state's voter photo ID bill on behalf of voters who did not possess a photo ID and on Tuesday a Judge ruled in their favor. Now Wisconsin voters without ID will be allowed to sign an affidavit at the polls, allowing them to cast a ballot on Election Day in November! The League opposed passage of the Wisconsin voter photo ID law and challenged it in state court.

July 29 at 1:33pm · **BREAKING:** The League has won a landmark voting rights case! Today, a U.S. Court of Appeals struck down the omnibus voter suppression law in North Carolina. «Democracy wins today. Voters win today. This decision is the latest in a string of major federal rulings that send a clear message: Politicians have no business standing in the way of our right to vote,» said Mary Klentz, co-president of the League of Women Voters of North Carolina, a plaintiff in the case.

Email Protocol Reminders

All Leaguers, as they communicate with one another, need to be aware of email protocols to keep the confusion to a minimum. At retreat, the Board established some guidelines to decrease the amount of time we spend on emails. Some key points to remember include:

- Begin the subject line with LWVFA.
- Be sure response needs to go to all the original recipients. Be sure subject line matches email content; address one topic at a time, even if this requires two emails.
- Before hitting "send" think about how the recipient will interpret your message; have you clearly stated the information?
- Response needed should be stated in subject line of emails requiring a response; cc line is for people that you want to receive the information, but do not need a response.
- "To" recipients should acknowledge receipt within 48 hours (exceptions for weekends, out-of-town, etc.).

- Sometimes a quick subject line response saying “Thanks” or “Got your message” is sufficient.
- We have established Email free weekends; this means you can send emails but do not expect weekend response (unless urgent).
- Add key email addresses to personal address book or contact list (whatever it is called on your personal computer) for LWVFA and LWV-VA so League communication is not blocked.

Remember sometimes a phone call is necessary.

Dues Are Due

It's that time of year again: time to renew your membership for 2016-17. Individual memberships remain \$65, households are \$90, students \$32.50. We are also willing to consider members' special financial circumstances.

You can pay by check or PayPal. To pay by check, go to **Membership Renewal form with Payment via Check** on our website. You will also find an automatic renewal option via PayPal. If you pay with this automatic online renewal option, your credit card will renew on the same date year after year -- no need to remember to pay your membership dues the following year

There is a PayPal link on the membership page, too: <http://www.lwv-fairfax.org/join.html> We welcome you!

Save the Date for LWVA-VA's Fall Workshops

LWV-VA fall workshops are scheduled on Saturday, September 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1793 Richmond Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22911. Plan to spend a day in Charlottesville--on an away-football-weekend for UVA—with League members from all over the state. The reason: sharing of valuable League ideas and strategies to deal with this very important election year. We are planning a day filled with information on topics of interest to League members. This year, we focus on Voter Service for the day, though other topics will be included.

Register today using the form on the following page.

Green Reads Point Out Our Fragile Ecosystems

By Elizabeth Lonoff

Share a reminder about imperiled ecosystems and animal populations and contemplate our species' uneasy seat atop the food web with your book group.

***Beyond the Hundredth Meridian* by William Stegner.** This book follows U.S. Geological Survey director John Wesley Powell's journey through the Colorado River basin and builds upon his conclusion that the arid West was incapable of supporting substantial human populations at any distance from the main water sources. A Fall for the Book multimedia event, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m. on September 29 at George Mason University's Harris Theater, adds a layer of why Powell's sound science was willfully rejected and what is happening today. This event will be supported by exhibits and seminars.



The white “bathtub ring” of mineral deposits marks the decline of Lake Mead, which is able to store two years of the Colorado River's historic annual flow. It currently holds only 9 months worth of that flow. Photo courtesy of US Bureau of Reclamation.

***The Sixth Extinction* by Elizabeth Kolbert.** According to this surprisingly digestible read, “It is estimated that one-third of all reef-building corals, a third of all freshwater mollusks, a third of sharks and rays, a quarter of all mammals, a fifth of all reptiles, and a sixth of all birds are headed toward oblivion. . . . There are all sorts of seemingly disparate reasons that species are disappearing. But trace the process far enough and inevitably you are led to the same culprit: [us].”

***Wild Ones* by Jon Mooallem.** This book's subtitle is “A Sometimes Dismaying, Weirdly Reassuring Story About Looking at People Looking at Animals in America.” Similar to our library's former Fairfax Reads program, this book is being given to instructors and incoming freshman at George Mason University for infusion into the campus. Watch the trailer at <https://vimeo.com/64778247> and catch the author at Fall for the Book, 4:30 - 6 p.m. on September 29 in the Center for the Arts' Concert Hall.



*** Registration Form ***

Fall Workshops
Saturday, September 17, 2016

Voter Service Matters

Hilton Garden Inn
1793 Richmond Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22911
Phone: (434) 979-4442

9:30 a.m.—Registration & Coffee

10:00 a.m. Plenary Session Briefings on:
Constitutional Amendments - Pro & Con; Electronic Voter Registration;
Nonpartisan Talking Points for November Election

11:00 a.m. Keynote Speaker, TBA

12 noon—Luncheon with Networking Opportunities

1:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions: Fracking Study Committee Report; Gun Safety Task Force Update

2:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions: Vote411.org Issues; Electronic Media

***** cut here to mail *****

I Plan to Attend These Two Breakout Sessions:

- 1:15 p.m. - Fracking Study Committee Report
1:15 p.m. - Gun Safety Task Force Update
1:15p.m. - Candidate Forums and Meet and Greets
2:15 p.m. - Vote411.org Issues
2:15 p.m. - Electronic Media

Registration (including lunch) is \$40

Deadline for Registration is September 9, 2016

Make checks payable to LWV-VA and mail with form to
12 Georgetown Green, Charlottesville, VA 22901

Name: _____ Registration(s) @ \$40 each_____

League Affiliation: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Questions: call Pat at 434-978-4532

NOTE: To pay by credit card, go to http://lwv-va.org/donate1.html and click on the General Fund PayPal donate button at the bottom of the page to order your ticket(s). After you place your order, a "Review Donations and Continue" screen will appear. Please indicate your League affiliation and your choice of break out sessions in the "Special Instructions to the Seller" block if appropriate. Click to finalize your payment.

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

Topic: The LWV Is Changing

Members and visitors are encouraged to attend any meeting convenient for them, including the "At Large Meeting" and briefing on Saturdays when a briefing is listed. As of August 1, 2016, the locations were correct; please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend. Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations.

Saturday, August 27

12 noon: At-Large Unit and Briefing

Mason District Gov. Center
6507 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003

Contact: Sherry 703-730-8118

NOTE: Will follow immediately after Kick Off

Thursday, Sept 8

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

11908 Paradise Lane
Herndon, VA 20171

Contact: Charleen 703-620-3593

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

Packard Center
4026 Hummer Road

Contact: Marge, 703-451-0589

10 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CCD)

Sully District Gov. Center
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.
Chantilly, VA 20151

Contact: Leslie, 571-213-6384

1 p.m. Fairfax/Vienna (FX-V)

Oakton Regional Library

10304 Lynnhaven Pl.

Oakton, VA 22124

Contact: Bob 563-299-5316

7:45 p.m. Mt. Vernon Evening (MVE)

Paul Spring Retirement
Community

Mt. Vernon Room

7116 Fort Hunt Road

Alexandria, VA 22307

Contact: Jane, 703-960-6820

Monday, Sept 12

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

Hunters Crossing Classroom

Spring Village Drive

Springfield, VA 22150

Contact: Edith (703) 644-3970 or
Gloria (703) 852-5113

Wednesday, Sept 14

9:30 a.m. McLean Day (McL)

StarNut Café

1445 Laughlin Ave.

McLean, VA 22101

Contact: Adarsh (703) 795-7281
or Anjali (703) 509-5518

9:45 a.m. Mt. Vernon Day (MVD)

Mt. Vernon Dist. Government
Center

2511 Parkers Lane

Alexandria, VA 22306

Contact: Gail (703) 360-6561 or
Diane (703) 704-5325

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

8739 Cuttermill Place

Springfield, VA 22153

Contact: Kathleen 703-644-1555

7:30 p.m. Reston Evening (RE)

Hunter Mill District Community
Room B

1801 Cameron Glen Drive

Reston, VA 21090

Contact: Kelly, 202-263-1311

October Meetings:

Electoral Process



The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA)
 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403
 703-658-9150. Web address: www.lwv-fairfax.org

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage Paid
 Merrifield, VA
 Permit No. 1202

**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER ©
 September, 2016
 Peggy Knight, Co-President
 Wendy Fox-Grage, Co-President
 Ron Page, Editor
 Liz Brooke, Coordinator**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the public to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, regional and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a member.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office, or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

LWVFA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership Dues: Individual \$65 _____ Household \$90 (2 persons, 1 Voter) _____ Student \$32.50 _____
Dues year is July 1 – June 30 (A subsidy fund is available; check here _____ and include whatever amount you can afford.)
Membership Status: New _____ Renewing _____ Reinstatement _____ Donation _____
 (Dues are not tax deductible. Tax-deductible donations must be written on a separate check or PayPal Payment to “LWVFA Ed Fund.”)

(Please print clearly)

Name _____ Unit (if renewing) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip + 4 _____

Phone (H) _____ (M) _____ E-Mail _____

Please make checks payable to “LWVFA” and mail to: **LWVFA, 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale VA 22003-2403.**
OR Join Online at: www.LWV-Fairfax.org/join.html

- I am interested in becoming involved in** *(please indicate by circling the appropriate bullet(s)):*
- **Providing organizational support** (graphics design, website development/maintenance, fundraising/ grant writing)
 - **Voter Services** (e.g., voter registration drives, candidate forums, developing Voters’ Guides)
 - **Researching/writing about issues in which LWVFA has an interest** (e.g., environment, firearms safety, mental health, schools, domestic violence, criminal justice; or, chairing an LWVFA study committee on voter turnout or human trafficking).
 - **Representing the League in governmental fora** (e.g., serving as LWVFA representative on Fairfax County citizens’ committees and agencies, such as affordable housing, Fairfax County Public Schools).
 - **Other** _____