

Fairfax VOTER

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Broken U.S. Treaties

This month we present an overview of the history of the United States and broken international treaties, starting with the early treaties negotiated between the newly-formed U.S. government and Native American tribes to the present day. A commitment to international cooperation as an essential path to world peace is deeply rooted in League history and the tenets of many international treaties align with the policy positions of the League of Women Voters.

Calendar

Note: LWVFA Units will meet virtually in March

- 1-31 Women's History Month
- 1 Fairfax Voter Deadline for the April issue
- 1 Watergate at Landmark Community Election, 2011 Yoakum Parkway, Alexandria, VA 22304
- 5 LWVNCA Virtual Board Meeting, 10:00 a.m.
- 6 LWVFA Briefing and At-Large Meeting, Virtual, 10 a.m.
- 8-11 League Units meet virtually
- 8 International Women's Day
- 10 LWV-VA Board Meeting
- 14-20 Sunshine/Open Government Week
- 17 LWVFA Board Meeting, Virtual, 10 a.m.

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Presidents' Message



Dear Leaguers,

We hope you all are getting ready for spring. It has been a long winter! Although, truth to tell, a blanketing of snow is always nice. The sight of fresh snow on the ground and children shrieking with excitement as they play outside always takes us back to days when our kids were little and enjoyed their snow days!

As we go into spring, we are gearing up for another few months of doing all our activities online. Save the date - April 24 - for our Annual Meeting which we will hold online again this year. And, though we shall, once again, miss seeing you all at our Annual Meeting lunch, we are planning to hold the meeting in real time. Details are being ironed out as we speak. Stay tuned!

A vital and ever-present topic for us all are our LWVFA fundraising efforts. Many people don't realize that, even as a volunteer-run organization, we still need funds to support all of our programs and literature. Yes, we collect dues from our members. But, did you know that only one quarter of our member dues stays with our local chapter? As part of a national organization, the rest of our dues go to support important initiatives at the State level with LWV-VA, at the regional level with LWVNCA and at the national level with LWVUS. This allows us to pool our resources and our manpower to support important educational and advocacy efforts.

Another source of our revenue in most years is the contributions we receive from running local HOA and community elections. However, with COVID, many of these elections have converted to online and digital, drying up much of this revenue.

The pandemic has put a big dent in our fundraising in other ways. We have not been able to have any in-person events where we accept contributions to cover our costs. Even no-fee activities, such as our candidate forums, when in-person, generate donations from attendees. Now that these programs are virtual, attendees no longer pass "the bucket" and so forget to contribute.

What can our members and community do? We can do-

nate to the League and encourage others to do so as well.

One fun way to generate much-needed funds and to show your League pride is to shop for LWVFA swag – sports-wear and mugs! You can buy patriotic flag scarves and T-Shirts, which are available both in short and long sleeves. Our range of sizes also includes men's sizes so everyone can wear their support and enthusiasm for the LWVFA on their sleeves! Relaxing around the house? Enjoy your favorite beverage in our lovely purple coffee mug that says, "Democracy is not a spectator sport." And boy, has that been proven in this last election! So, it is a good time to get that mug and start your morning with a reminder! Plus, there is no need to come pick up your order as we can ship everything to you!!

While you are enjoying tea or coffee in your LWVFA mug, be sure to check out the new *Facts for Voters 2021* which is ready and available online. It is guaranteed to be informative good reading for everyone. There will be a quiz at the Annual Meeting! Just kidding!

**Fairfax County 24-hr.
Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline:
703-360-7273; 711 TTY**

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2020 - 2021

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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

Co-Presidents: Anu Sahai 703-303-8498
President2@lwv-fairfax.org
Nancy Roodberg 703-867-9403
President1@lwv-fairfax.org
Editor: Katherine Ingmanson 571-265-9745
kmingmanson@yahoo.com
editor@lwv-fairfax.org

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Please e-mail address corrections to the office
or call 703-658-9150.

As a continued safeguard for our health, unit meetings will remain online. We can be very proud of how we have all learned to master Zoom and get ourselves on and off mute! Once the pandemic is past, there is discussion about adopting a hybrid model for meetings, making them available both virtually and in person. Though we love to sit down and see each other face-to-face, providing the option of attending via one's computer or phone may make our meetings more accessible to some of our membership and facilitate participation.

Having said that, we do hope we shall be able to hold our Annual Retreat in person. Since it is summer there is the ability to hold it outdoors and have ourselves a little picnic! With that sunny thought in mind, we wish all our Leaguers a very warm and welcome start of spring!

Anu and Nancy

Spotlight on Voter Services

The Voter Services volunteer team focuses on providing educational and informational public services, registering people to vote, getting out the vote, and initiating outreach programs to groups of potential voters. Interested in joining our team? We need you. Contact cindy.kalkwarf@lwv-fairfax.org.

Voter Services Expands Outreach Through Pandemic Challenges

By Sherri Gillam

Voter Services is enthusiastically making plans to provide current and useful voting information to individuals in our community, despite continued challenges due to COVID-19. At this time we are working on three initiatives which will require increased participation from interested LWVFA members.

Voter registration services were provided to newly naturalized citizens following naturalization ceremonies. On October 13, 2020, outside the US Citizenship and Immigration office in Fairfax, we registered approximately 130 brand new, very excited American citizens. Plans are being made to provide Voter Registration following naturalization ceremonies in Fairfax on an ongoing basis.

Voter Education through distribution of information by our partners at food banks will expand this year. Last year,

we partnered with 23 local food banks who assisted us by distributing 14,000 bilingual “*Quick Reference Guides for Fairfax Voters*,” often reaching parts of our community that are typically underserved. This year we hope to partner with more food banks in Fairfax County and also pilot a program asking additional LWVFA members to deliver Voter Education materials to these food banks.

Voter Information was provided last year at farmers markets and other locations throughout the County. Due to precautions for COVID-19, we modified our approach and used large sandwich boards accompanied by LWVFA members to urge people to register and to provide updates about changes in voting procedures in Fairfax County. We reached over 18,000 people at 70 events and hope to exceed that number in 2021. We were prepared for questions about the reliability of in-person and mail-in voting and ready to refute allegations of widespread voter fraud. We also gave a virtual step-by-step Voter Information presentation that was recorded by the Reston Regional Library. It is still on the Library's YouTube channel. Just go to YouTube and input “Your Vote is Your Voice League of Women Voters” to find it. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7kqv5IxJWw&t=2039s>.)

We helped combat voter misinformation on social media by becoming the first local League to join the MITRE Corporation's SQUINT project, and we championed the project to other Leagues across the country. SQUINT was developed for Offices of Elections and members of non-partisan organizations like ours to report election misinformation spotted on social media so that it can be publicly corrected. More than 6,000 SQUINTs were sent by SQUINTers throughout the United States from project inception through the Electoral College certification. More than 3,000 had misinformation that warranted full processing as a possible threat to our election process.

This year we will continue our outreach to groups that have particular challenges in finding opportunities to vote: health care professionals, senior centers and senior residences, and former felons qualified to have their voting rights restored. We will hold Candidate Forums for our State Congressional district elections.

The High School Voter Registration Team normally works in high school classrooms helping eligible high school students register to vote and providing voter education. Currently, this is not possible due to the pandemic, and we have made changes to our work.

- » We created a webpage filled with resources for high school teachers that includes PowerPoints, Notes for Teachers, and videos. These resources explain how

to register to vote, obtain nonpartisan and accurate facts about issues, and vote in-person or absentee, and other information. To view this page, go to <https://www.lwv-fairfax.org/resources>.

- » Virtual voter registration events were held with three high schools in the fall. To do this, we learned to use the two FCPS platforms, Blackboard and Google Meet, and additional volunteers will be trained on using them to provide virtual presentations. We continue to communicate with our high school Points of Contact offering updates and assistance. High schools are already requesting virtual voter registration events for classes during the spring semester.
- » There is a remaining challenge. Many students who do not have a Virginia driver’s license, learner’s permit, or DMV ID must register using a paper application form. Due to the shortened hours of the DMV, many students do not have these documents, and until schools open, we cannot provide paper forms. We sent an information sheet about how to obtain a paper form to all high schools; however, this is not a complete solution to the problem.
- » We are collaborating with the Fairfax Office of Elections to explore how students may be able to receive paper registration forms. We are confident that even in these difficult times, we can continue assisting students register to vote.

Sidney Johnson, Arina Van Breda, Bob Meredith, Pat Fege and Cindy Kalkwarf contributed to this article.

Public Input Sought

By Julie Jones

There are two chances to make your voices heard on issues for which LWVFA has current positions. As found in *Here We Stand*, LWVFA’s positions, “The LWV of the Fairfax Area supports coordinating land use planning/development and redevelopment with County and City transportation comprehensive plans. . . .We support an ongoing review of development and redevelopment plans to allow timely responses to changing conditions, emerging issues, resident input and technological advances.”

FAA solicits Public Input on its Airport Noise Policy

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is releasing a summary on civil aircraft noise that could potentially impact future aircraft noise policy. The FAA invites public comment by **March 15, 2021**, on the scope and applicability of these research initiatives to address aircraft noise. A

notice published in the *Federal Register* on Jan 13, 2021, was titled “Overview of FAA Aircraft Noise Policy and Research Efforts: Request for Input on Research Activities To Inform Aircraft Noise Policy.” Visit www.FAA.gov and enter “noise research and public comment” in the search bar or www.faa.gov/news/updates/?newsId=96479.

The FAA will not make any determinations based on the findings of these research programs for the FAA’s noise policies until it has carefully considered public and other stakeholder input along with any additional research needed to improve the understanding of the effects of aircraft noise exposure on communities. Successfully addressing noise requires continued and increased collaboration among all stakeholders. **Make your comments before the March 15 deadline.**

zMOD - Fairfax County Zoning Ordinance Modernization Project

As stated on the Fairfax County Planning and Development Department website, “The Zoning Ordinance Modernization project (zMOD) has been included on the Zoning Ordinance Amendment Work Program since 2016. The goals of this project are to modernize the County’s Zoning Ordinance, to make the regulations easier for all stakeholders to understand, and to remove inconsistencies, gaps, and ambiguities that have found their way into the ordinance since initial adoption of the current ordinance in 1978. In addition to creating a new, more intuitive format and organization, creating new graphics, and editing the text for readability, . . . the modernization effort has focused on certain revisions to the uses, including adding new use names, consolidating uses, creating new uses where appropriate, developing updated definitions, and making revisions to some of the use regulations. . . . After adoption, the Ordinance will be made available in a new online format that will be responsive to different types of devices from a cell phone to a tablet and desktop.”

Various public outreach strategies have been used to inform and engage the public. These have included meetings, websites, emails, social media outlets, videos, newsletters, surveys, and work groups. Citizens can view the final draft document (reduced from 1200 to 751 pages) on the zMOD website. This effort is coming to an end with a **public hearing of the Planning Commission in late January 2021 and a Board of Supervisors public hearing on March 9, 2021.**

Make Your Voice Heard!!

Broken U.S. Treaties

By Dianne Blais

This month we present an overview of the history of the United States and broken international treaties, starting with the early treaties negotiated between the newly-formed U.S. government and Native American tribes to the present day. A commitment to international cooperation as an essential path to world peace is deeply rooted in League history and the tenets of many international treaties align with the policy positions of the League of Women Voters.

Note from author: I've been dismayed by recent withdrawals from major treaties and saddened that the U.S. has not signed or ratified treaties that seem important, like Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This prompted me to wonder about the status of other treaties. Our more than 500 broken treaties with Native Americans have had so many ramifications, and I wanted to know more about why some say war, economic sanctions, and using nuclear weapons are illegal.

Forgiveness Clause: My career never involved international treaties. I beg forgiveness for any inaccuracies or shortcomings.

Definition of a Treaty. An international treaty is a binding formal agreement that has legal force between two or more states (countries). The term treaty is commonly used to describe a variety of instruments, including conventions, agreements, arrangements, protocols, covenants, pacts, accords, charters (of international organizations), and acts. Treaties are expected to be executed in good faith, in keeping with the principle of *pacta sunt servanda* (Latin: “agreements must be kept”), arguably the oldest principle of international law.

Two Types of Treaties. Treaties can be bilateral, i.e., between just two states (countries) or multilateral, i.e., among several states. Multilateral treaties bind only those states that are parties to them and may go into effect only after a specified number of parties have ratified. Multilateral treaties are often called conventions.

How treaties are generated. A treaty is normally negotiated between diplomats invested with plenipotentiary authority. Entry into force can occur upon signature by authorized representatives, but most often occurs only upon ratification according to each country’s constitutional or legislative requirements. Once a country has ratified a treaty (or convention) then it is said to be a party to that treaty and is “bound” by the treaty. International treaties are one of the oldest forms of com-

munication among sovereigns. World-wide, some 3,000 multilateral and 27,000 bilateral treaties are in effect today. The United States enters into more than 200 treaties and other international agreements each year.

Treaties, Executive Agreements, and TPA

At least 37 treaties are with the Senate, pending action. Some have been waiting decades. Because ratification has become so rare, recent administrations have favored Executive Agreements, which can be implemented without Congressional action (the Iran Nuclear Agreement fell into this category). In order to facilitate trade agreements, Congress has passed limited legislation granting various administrations “Fast Track” or “Trade Promotion” Authority (TPA). Under TPA, the Executive Branch can negotiate a trade agreement based on certain parameters, and the resulting agreement can be approved by Congress with an up-or-down simple majority vote.

United States Treaties

Article II of the U.S. Constitution specifies that a treaty is an agreement negotiated and signed by a member of the Executive branch. The treaty requires approval by a two-thirds majority of the Senate and affirmation/signature by the President. All treaties in this study that have a separate line with their title bolded followed by the year of signature are Article II treaties. Our Constitution declares a treaty to be the law of the land.

Capriciousness about treaties started with the country’s creation: hundreds of treaties signed with Native American tribes were either broken or not ratified.

Native American Treaties

Between 1570 and 1600, some Native tribes formed the Iroquois Confederacy. It is often characterized as one of the world’s oldest participatory democracies. The Confederacy’s oral constitution, the Great Law of Peace (Gayanashagowa), may have influenced some aspects of the U.S. Constitution.

European (British, French, Spanish) colonization and the United States' westward expansion entailed numerous wars and feckless treaties with indigenous peoples. Native Americans were often coerced, deceived, manipulated, and misled into giving up their lands for pittances and promises that frequently proved empty.

Britain recognized American independence in the 1783 Treaty of Paris. (Note: there are 35 Treaties of Paris signed between 1229 and 1973.) The Treaty stated: "There shall be firm and perpetual peace between his Britannic Majesty and the said states."

A year later, in 1784, the Iroquois Confederacy and Timothy Pickering, the agent for President George Washington, signed the Treaty of Canandaigua. Only one article of the Treaty has been observed, which provides annual funds to the tribes. Much of the land the Treaty set aside for the six nations was eventually confiscated, most recently with one-third of the Seneca reservation flooded by the construction of the Kinzua Dam in 1965.

In 1812, less than 30 years after the 1783 Treaty of Paris, the U.S. Congress officially declared war on Great Britain. This was the first Congressional declaration of war in the nation's history. The war came to an end in 1814 through the Treaty of Ghent, signed by Britain and the United States in Ghent, Belgium. All British-held territory in the Northwest (between Michigan and Maine) was surrendered to the United States, without consulting with the Native Americans who lived there.

In 1830, President Andrew Jackson championed the "Indian Removal Act." Once the Act was passed Jackson and his followers were free to persuade, bribe, and threaten tribes into signing removal treaties. By the end of his Presidency, he had signed into law almost 70 removal treaties, the result of which was to move nearly 50,000 eastern Native Americans to areas west of the Mississippi River. The tribes that refused to leave were forcibly removed. In 1838, the Cherokee Nation was forced to give up land and move to Oklahoma, a journey known as the "Trail of Tears."

Between 1776 and 1871, native tribes concluded more than 500 treaties with the United States. Approximately 370 were ratified by the U.S. Senate. Congress ended treaty negotiations with the tribes in 1871 because it assumed that individual Native Americans would soon be swallowed up within American society. In two crucial court decisions in 1902 and 1903, the Supreme Court held that Congress has the power to modify or terminate such treaties without the Native Americans' consent.

Notable Treaties Not Ratified by the United States

The United States has recently refrained from ratifying numerous multilateral agreements that have been widely endorsed by other nations. By remaining outside these treaties through non-entry or exit, the United States has cast doubt on its commitment to multilateral cooperation. All the following treaties are listed with the date on which they were adopted or established. When a state signs a treaty, it is obliged to uphold the terms within. It often takes two or more years before treaties have enough ratifications so that they enter into force (for those countries that have ratified the treaty and are now bound by the treaty's provisions).

Human Rights Treaties Not Ratified by the United States

The United States has refrained from joining many international human rights treaties, making it an outlier for a nation of its stature. Though the reasons are varied, and often complicated, many believe this failure of the U.S. to join with other nations in taking on international human rights legal obligations has undercut its international leadership, limiting its influence, stature, and credibility in promoting respect for human rights around the world. Below are some of the most significant non-ratifications.

International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966

Building onto the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ICESCR expands the notion of basic rights beyond civil and political provisions. The agreement has been ratified by 171 countries. The U.S., Palau, Cuba, and Comoros have signed, but not ratified, the covenant.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979

The Convention was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. It serves as an international bill of rights for women and leaves no doubt that the UN considers discrimination against women to be a continuing violation of its core principles of equality and respect for human dignity. By signing CEDAW in 1980, the U.S. became one of 156 signatories of a landmark agreement to end gender discrimination. Shortly after signing, then-president Jimmy Carter submitted the agreement for ratification to the Senate where the process stalled. There are now 189 states party to the treaty and just two (U.S. and Palau) that have signed but have not ratified.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989

The CRC is a landmark human rights document for several reasons. It is the first defining agreement on the rights of

children, and it incorporates a wide range of rights (education, health, justice) for minors. It achieved broad support very quickly with entry into force in less than a year and currently 196 countries are states parties to the treaty. The U.S. signed the agreement in 1995 but is the only signatory that has not ratified it.

Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990

Also known as the Migrant Workers Convention (MWC), this treaty defines an “international migrant” and identifies the protections that are essential to them, such as the same rights to education and healthcare as national citizens. To date, 56 countries have ratified or acceded to the MWC. Although the U.S. was one of the nations involved in the original drafting of the document, it continues to withhold support as do all major migrant-receiving countries around the world.

Notable End of War/Arms Control Treaties Not Ratified by the United States

Treaty of Versailles, 1919

President Woodrow Wilson negotiated and promoted the primary treaty that ended World War I, which was signed between the Allied Powers and Germany. Commenting on the U.S.’s role in brokering the deal, Wilson famously said, “At last the world knows America as the savior of the world!”

However, the President encountered strong and growing opposition to the Treaty in Congress, and the U.S. never ratified the Treaty. In fact, the U.S. never joined the League of Nations and did not formally end its war against Germany and the former Austro-Hungarian empire until 1921.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, 1996

Although the Treaty banning nuclear testing was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996, and has been ratified by 166 countries, the agreement is not yet in effect because the U.S., Pakistan, India, Iran, and Israel have failed to ratify it.

WMDs Mine Ban Treaty, 1997

The goal of the Mine Ban is to eliminate landmines, prohibiting their production, stockpiling, or use. 164 countries

have signed and ratified it, but the U.S. is one of 32 states (including Russia, India, and China) that has not signed the Treaty. In 2020, the U.S. lifted restrictions on the deployment of anti-personnel landmines by American forces.

Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), 2008

The CCM prohibits the use, transfer, and stockpiling of cluster bombs. It entered into force in August 2010, six months after it was ratified by 30 countries. To date, 123 countries have signed the Treaty and 110 have ratified or acceded to it. The Treaty was opposed by a number of countries that produce or stockpile cluster munitions, including the United States.

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), 2017

The TPNW, sometimes referred to as the Nuclear-Ban Treaty, has not been signed by the U.S., and in fact the U.S. actively discouraged countries from ratifying it. The needed 50 countries’ ratifications were reached in October 2020 and it entered into force on January 22, 2021.

Other Treaties not Ratified by the United States

International Labor Convention, 1949

The oldest treaty currently pending ratification in the Senate is an international recognition of the freedom of association and protection of the right to organize. The agreement was signed by 154 countries, including the U.S., and entered in full effect in 1950.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982

Between 1973 and 1982, marathon negotiations produced the UNCLOS which established a set of rules and responsibilities governing the way countries and international bodies act in international waters. The convention details the requirements of search and rescue at sea.

Kyoto Protocol, 1997

There were essentially no treaties dealing with the environment prior to 1992. The first treaty to deal directly with global warming was the Kyoto Protocol, which seeks to limit greenhouse gases. Though the U.S. signed the agreement limiting carbon emissions, there was no political path to Senate ratification. The U.S. is one of just four UN member states

Compliance without Ratification

In some instances, the U.S. will uphold its negotiated commitments under a treaty or other agreement, even without formal ratification. Among the most notable is the Law of the Sea Treaty, where the U.S. “still has committed itself to abiding by its principles in two ways: through numerous policy statements and laws drafted in accordance with UNCLOS and committing the U.S. to abiding by it; and due to the fact that the Law of the Sea has become customary international law.”
(<https://www.unclosdebate.org/argument/855/us-already-abides-unclos-matter-customary-international-law-and-domestic-policy>)

that is an outlier in not pursuing its commitments under the agreement, along with Andorra, Canada, and South Sudan.

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998

This treaty establishing an international criminal court was negotiated by 148 countries. President Clinton signed the agreement in 2000 but delayed submitting it to the Senate for ratification on the grounds that the U.S. needed to observe how the tribunal worked. Two years later, after the treaty had come into full effect and been ratified by 60 countries, President George W. Bush informed the United Nations that the U.S. no longer intended to submit the agreement to the Senate for ratification.

United States Treaty Withdrawals

The last Administration abandoned negotiations on two significant trade deals, the *Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)* and the *Arms Trade Treaty*. It also withdrew from the *Iran Nuclear Deal or Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) of 2015* and the landmark *Paris Agreement*, signed on Earth Day, April 22, 2016, which were not Article II treaties but were important international agreements. There has been much controversy about the actions listed in this paragraph along with the following Article II Treaty withdrawals.

Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, 1972-2002

The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and USSR under which each promised to establish no more than one ABM site on their national territory. The agreement banned the testing, development, and deployment of sea-, air-, space-, and mobile land-based systems. The U.S. withdrew from the ABM in 2002, despite enormous national and international objections.

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), 1987

This bilateral Treaty, signed by the United States and USSR in 1987, prohibits both parties from possessing, producing or flight-testing ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles, which could carry nuclear bombs with ranges of 500–5,000 kilometers. The U.S. pulled out in August 2019 and Russian President Vladimir Putin suspended his country's own obligations under the Treaty later the same day. The withdrawal of the U.S. from the INF Treaty prompted concerns that a restart of the Cold War between Russia and the U.S. may be forthcoming.

Treaty on Open Skies, 1992

Prompted by U.S. President George H.W. Bush, the Open Skies Treaty established a regime of unarmed observation flights over the territories of States Parties. In 2020 the United States announced its withdrawal, citing persistent

Russian violations.

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations Optional Protocol (VCDR), 1961

In September 2018, the Palestinian Authority filed an application in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) arguing that the decision to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem violates U.S. obligations under the VCDR's Optional Protocol concerning the Compulsory Settlements of Disputes. Subsequently, the U.S. announced its intention to withdraw from the Protocol.

Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights with Iran, 1955

The U.S. announced its withdrawal from the Treaty of Amity, Economic Relations, and Consular Rights in October 2018, following a ruling by the International Court of Justice that the United States had violated the Treaty. Withdrawal was effective October 3, 2019.

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), 2010

was set to expire February 5, 2021; however, on January 26, 2021, the U.S. and Russia agreed to an extension, and on February 3, they confirmed the extension would be for a five-year period. The treaty restricts the United States and Russia to 1,550 deployed strategic warheads each and includes details of how each country can verify that the other is complying.

Broken Treaties

The Kellogg–Briand Pact, 1929

The French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand, and the U.S. Secretary of State, Frank Kellogg, developed the “General Treaty for Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy.” The Kellogg–Briand Pact was signed in 1928 and promised not to use war to resolve “disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be.” The Pact was ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1929. It did not prevent World War II and is considered by most historians to have been hopelessly idealistic, but it formed a significant part of the legal basis for the post-World War II prosecutions of German and Japanese leaders.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), 1968

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) contains the only binding commitment to nuclear disarmament in a multilateral treaty on the part of the nuclear-weapon states. The NPT's "grand bargain" states that the nuclear-weapon states pledge to disarm, while non-nuclear-weapon states pledge never to acquire nuclear weapons.

When the NPT became international law in 1970, there were five nuclear-weapon states: China, France, the United

Kingdom, the United States, and the USSR. Since then, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have developed nuclear weapons. These four states are the only countries not party to the Treaty. Member states must accept stringent verification measures, including allowing inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to visit their nuclear facilities and verify that materials have not been diverted for military purposes.

Because there are still about 15,000 nuclear weapons on our planet and the U.S. plans to spend \$1 trillion to modify and update its nuclear weapons, some consider this a broken Treaty and the reason for the subsequent 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (which the U.S. declined to sign). However, the NPT is successful in that the Review Conference continues to meet every five years and the Treaty appears to have prevented and continues to prevent the increase of nuclear armed countries.

Illegality of War, Economic Sanctions and Nuclear Weapons

Although the Kellogg-Briand Pact declared war illegal, there were no mechanisms for enforcement. In theory, this Treaty could have been used to prevent involvement in the seven wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Libya, and Niger that the U.S. is now fighting. However, in practice, the Pact did little, if anything, to stop any wars.

Economic sanctions are sometimes equated as economic wars causing slow, hidden death to the affected populations. Sanctions Kill, a coalition seeking to end U.S. sanctions, notes that the U.S. has economic sanctions against 39 countries, comprising roughly one-third of the world's population. According to the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), economic sanctions on Venezuela were responsible for over 40,000 deaths in 2017. Although economic sanctions are considered a modern, more civilized tool to replace wars, the United Nations has declared that severe sanctions that affect the ability of the general population to buy food and medicine are immoral and illegal under international human rights law. Extreme sanctions are being used by the U.S. in Iran and Venezuela.

The use of nuclear weapons is and always has been illegal, per the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, because they cause indiscriminate harm and unnecessary suffering, killing both civilians and soldiers. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons prohibits testing, producing or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

Treaties, the United Nations, and the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters of the United States' policy position on International Relations states that the League "...believes cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace." LWVUS has lobbied the Senate for many disarmament measures, notably the United Nations-negotiated Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The International Relations position also includes strong support for the United Nations, noting it should be an important component of U.S. foreign policy. In alignment to League positions, democracy is a core value of the United Nations and democratic principles respecting human rights are enshrined in its conventions. In addition, LWVUS supports "...full U.S. participation in the international judicial system and U.S. ratification and observance of international treaties and conventions consistent with LWVUS principles and positions."

There are many parallels between the policy positions of the LWVUS and core United Nations human rights conventions. For more information, please see the *Briefing Book on Human Rights* First Edition 2019-2020: *Synergy Between Policies of The League of Women Voters and United Nations Human Rights Conventions* (updated November 2020), available at <http://bit.ly/HR-SIG>.

Various recent actions have brought into question the cooperation of the U.S. in UN goals. Some of particular note:

In 2017, the State Department pulled out of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In 2018, the U.S. pulled out of the United Nations Human Rights Council. (Ed. note - On February 8, the Administration announced its intention to re-engage with the Council.)

On July 6, 2020, the U.S. delivered its formal intent to withdraw from the World Health Organization. However, on January 20, 2021, the Biden Administration announced plans to rejoin.

There are many reasons the United States seems to be an outlier in the U.N. and many ways for the U.S. to improve relations. One goal to consider is ensuring that the feminist perspective is included in the creation, ratification and ad-

ministration of international treaties. Female participation has been found to bolster peace building and democracy - goals supported by League positions.

Sources:

- Annalisa Merelli. “Broken Promises: It’s not just Trump/The U.S. has always broken its treaties, pacts and promise”, Quartz, May 12, 2018.
- Chimène Keitner. “What Are the Consequences of the Trump Administration’s Recent Treaty Withdrawals?”, Just Security, October 17, 2018.
- Impact on Issues: A Guide to Public Policy Positions. League of Women Voters of America 2020-22.
- Oona Hathaway. “Reengaging on Treaties and Other International Agreements (Part I & II): President Donald Trump’s Rejection of International Law”, Just Security, October 2, 2020.
- Sanctions Kill website, <https://sanctionskill.org/> accessed January 28, 2021.
- Treaties Keep The Peace, Broken Treaties Lead To War, by Cherrill Spencer. Prepared for the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) US, October 2019. (unpublished)
- United Nations website, <https://www.un.org/en/>. Multiple access dates 2021.
- <https://www.state.gov/treaties-pending-in-the-senate/>

Discussion Questions

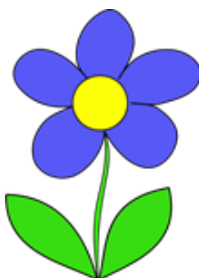
1. The United States has a history of not ratifying international treaties or withdrawing from them. Why do you think the U.S. is an outlier in this regard?
2. One notable treaty not ratified by the U.S. is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which has been approved by 189 countries, but not the U.S or Palau. Why do you think the United States has not made this treaty a priority? (For more information on CEDAW see page 12 of the Briefing Book on Human Rights <http://bit.ly/HR-SIG.>)
3. What information did you find most interesting or surprising in this report?
4. Of the unratified (or withdrawn) treaties mentioned, which would you make a priority to support or explore further?
5. Many League policy positions align with the tenets of international treaties, particularly in the area of human rights and democracy.
 - a. What role can the League play in supporting the ratification of treaties that align with LWV policy positions?
 - b. Is there a role the Fairfax League could play at the local level? If so, please elaborate.

Program Director Notes

by Jessica Storrs

In January the units discussed Part II of the LWV-VA Election Law Position Update. Most units agreed the report was very thorough and well researched. Feedback ranged from “one of the best reports we’ve had” to noting it was too dense and it should have been split into two parts. Thank you all for providing feedback on this very important update. This position will be considered at the LWV-VA Convention in May 2021.

Plan ahead! June will be a “do your own thing” month. Units should start thinking about what sort of meeting they would like to organize. Ideas include choosing a book title to discuss, or setting up an online meeting with a County agency or organization that you’d like more information about. Or perhaps a fundraiser. The choice is yours!



Happy Spring!!





Annual Meeting
Saturday, April 24, 2021
 Virtual
 9:30 a.m. – Sign-on begins

Suggested donation to support our work: \$20

Registration

Register online: 2021am.eventbrite.com by Friday, April 23rd

Register by mail: fill out the following form, and mail no later than Monday, April 12th. Why so early? We need to send you the virtual login information.

Send to:

Lynn Stewart, LWVFA Treasurer
 LWVFA
 4026-B Hummer Road
 Annandale, VA 22003-2403

Name(s) _____

E-mail (Required to receive virtual login link) _____

Make donation checks payable to LWVFA. Donation enclosed \$ _____

Virtual Login information: We will send the virtual login information by Friday, April 23rd.

For more, visit www.lwv-fairfax.org/2021am or 2021am.eventbrite.com

Shop and Show your League spirit!

Buy LWVFA t-shirts and mugs and scarves to wear to the Annual Meeting:

www.lwv-fairfax.org/shop

Questions? Contact Anu Sahai and Nancy Roodberg, president@lwv-fairfax.org

2021 NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee recommends the following slate to serve as Officers and Directors of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area and the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area Education Fund.

To Be Elected to Serve Two-year Terms, 2021-2023, Beginning July 1, 2021:

Officers:

Co-President	Pat Fege
Secretary	Lois Page

Directors:

Membership Director	Donna Blake
Public Relations	Katharina Gollner-Sweet
Voters Service Coordinator	Donald Craig
Voters Service: Voter Registration	Arina Van Breda
At-Large	Cindy Kalkwarf
At-Large	Nancy Roodberg

To Be Elected to Serve One-year Term, 2021-2022, Beginning July 1, 2021:

Nominating Committee

Chair	Judy Helein
Nominating Committee Member	Carol Bursik
Nominating Committee Member	Wendy Fox-Grage

The Nominating Committee thanks all of the LWVFA members who have volunteered to serve in off-Board positions for 2020-2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Nominating Committee: Ann Parham, Chair
Liz Brooke, Wendy Fox-Grage, Judy Helein, Kathleen Pablo

ACTION and ADVOCACY: Participate in LWV-VA Issue Groups

By Jill Follows

Fairfax Area LWV members are active in State League Issue Groups. The dedicated work and enthusiasm of our members is acknowledged and appreciated. The following summary is the first in a series on LWV-VA Issue Groups:

Voter Access/Voter Services (LWVFA Member Donald Craig is Co-Chair) The primary purpose of this Issue Group is to familiarize members with the LWV-VA's positions by researching, monitoring and making recommendations pertaining to the LWV-VA priorities around the following subjects: Witness Removal; Ballot Curing; Universal Right to Work; National Popular Vote; Permanent

Drop Box; Pre-Clearance; and Broadband. Committee members will attend hearings, learn key opposition points and develop talking points. Committee information will be shared with local units to assist with League and public education. All members with an interest in advocacy are welcome to join.

For more information on this and other State-wide Issue Groups, please contact firstvp@lww-va.org

The other Issue Groups are:
Affordable Housing; Behavioral Health; Campaign Finance; Census; Criminal Justice; Child Care; Condo Elections; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Domestic Violence; Harrassment; Education; Election Security and Integrity; Elections: *General*; Elections: *Local*; Environment; Students; Transportation; Access to Voting; Voter Girl; Voter Education; Campaign Finance Reform.

Protect Birds and the Environment

By Elizabeth Lonoff

Over the last 50 years, North America’s bird population has declined by nearly 30%, right outside our windows. Robins and sparrows control pests, spread the seeds of native trees, and pollinate flowers. The urbanization of Fairfax County parallels the global trend, reducing habitat and increasing the use of pesticides.

Since the mid-2010s, the Northern Virginia Purple Martin Initiative has helped establish nesting sites for this songbird, including 21 in Fairfax County parks. The purple martin is our largest native swallow. It has a high tolerance of humans, on whom it has come to depend for housing. Perhaps you’ve noticed the natural gourds or apartment houses, with maintenance mainly consisting of an annual cleaning. Favored nesting sites are open areas 40-60 feet from trees and within ¾ mile of a waterbody that attracts dragonflies and can be skimmed to drink. Learn more at www.purplemartin.org. To suggest new nesting sites as the purple martins return this year, contact Initiative founder **Mike Bishop**, mwbishop@cox.net.



Bishop designed this bird blind, built as an Eagle Scout project in the woods directly across from the Cub Run Recreation Center’s main doors. Photo: Mike Bishop

As part of Birds and Bees Engineers, Bishop, **Joe Gorney**, **Cynde Sears**, **Alexis Slebodnick**, **Paul Slebodnick**, and **Bill White** were honored by the Fairfax County Park Authority with a 2020 Elly Doyle Park Service Special Recognition Award for outstanding volunteer service. They have invested hundreds of hours over the last six years to install and maintain homes for bluebirds and purple martins at County parks. In a new partnership, Twin Lakes Golf Course is starting a honeybee yard.

Through these efforts the team is helping to assure the biodiversity of natural areas and preserve native species. Twin Lakes alone now has 35 bluebird boxes with 75 fledglings last year. Its six purple martin colonies are expected to produce 350 new birds annually. Each of the four active honeybee hives can house an average of 50,000 bees.

Sara Holtz, Site Leader at Difficult Run Stream Valley Park for the Invasive Management Area Program and Oakton Resident Volunteer Natural Resource Steward, re-

ceived both a 2020 Elly Doyle Park Service Award and the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District’s (NVSWCD’s) 2020 Diane Hoffman Cooperator of the Year Award. She works to remove non-native invasive plants from the park, leads workdays for volunteer groups totaling more than 430 volunteers in 930 hours of service, and educates Scouts and other young volunteers on the importance of habitat restoration. Holtz also donates more than 1,000 hours each year to protect stream health, promote native gardens, and mentor youth in her community. The Holtz residence’s front yard conservation landscaping project was featured on the 2019 Sustainable Garden Tour.

Congratulations also to **Kirk Kincannon**. He retired last month as Executive Director of the Fairfax County Park Authority. During his four decades as a parks, recreation, and cultural resources professional Kincannon was well-known by his colleagues for his collaboration, leadership, and his ability to engage with staff, colleagues, the community, and political leaders. During his tenure, the Park Authority adopted its first agency-wide Master Plan and earned its fourth Gold Medal from the National Recreation and Park Association in recognition of its outstanding park system management.

Upcoming Activities

- To lead an event for the *33rd Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup on April 10th*, attend a virtual workshop to learn how to organize a safe local trash cleanup.
- Register for either the *March 3rd session at 6:30-7:30 p.m.*, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-organize-a-cleanup-tickets-131507982917>, or the *March 6th session at 10:30-11:30 a.m.*, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/how-to-organize-a-cleanup-tickets-131511629825>. Or simply volunteer for one of the events already scheduled at <http://trashnetwork.fergusonfoundation.org/map/>.
- DC’s 2021 environmental* film festival will be held online, March 18th-28th. Meanwhile, 2020 selections and educational films are available at dceff.org.

A Vision to Fight Domestic Violence for 2021

By Theresa M. Brion

The Fairfax County Council to End Domestic Violence (CEDV) held its quarterly meeting on January 21, 2021, with its new Chairman, Supervisor James Walkinshaw (Braddock). He shared his desire to improve the CEDV's diversity and strengthen its focus on serving the local community. He sought analyses of its structure and bylaws to determine needed improvements, which could include the establishment of a leadership team.

In conjunction with Joe Meyer, Nominations Committee Chair, he shared former Supervisor John Cook's willingness to serve as a continuing (non-chair) member of the CEDV. Both also shared that Chair Walkinshaw had asked Supervisor Dalia Palchik (Providence) to serve as the Board of Supervisors' representative to CEDV. Palchik briefly shared her appreciation for the CEDV and its work.

Michael Becketts, Director, Fairfax County Division of Family Services, spoke on the community's perception of County government. He said recent events have focused attention on how government treats people and how the public perceives government efforts to assist and protect it. Public perception is that government is failing to protect people. CEDV members, including several survivors of violence, responded by sharing their experiences and impression of the government's record. Confusion about paperwork and process, as well as departmental power battles, have contributed to feelings of invisibility by persons experiencing violence. Victims need access to advocates while engaging in the investigative process. Several suggested a need for training and education. Saly Fayez, Director, Victim Services Division, FCPD, outlined current training efforts, indicating that advocates are available in police stations. The discussion also focused on how to better inform CEDV members of the issues and needs.

The Equity Workgroup/Committee, chaired by Toni Zollicoffe and Corie O'Roarke, held its first meeting on December 11, 2021. The Committee is planning a workshop in late February to focus on building trust, vocabulary, etc., in preparation for its work.

The Court Process Workgroup, chaired by Judge Susan Stoney and K. Leigh Taylor, reported on a process for obtaining or appealing a firearm protective order, which is now streamlined and consistent between the courts. Communication and streamlining of processes will be a high priority for the workgroup.

LWFVA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Carol Bursik

As of February 1, 2021, LWFVA has 452 active members. On January 29 we had to drop 78 members from the rolls in order to avoid paying fees to the National and State Leagues for inactive members. Anyone who did not submit their renewal by the January 22 deadline will be reinstated as soon as we receive the renewal form and payment. Others who may have forgotten to renew may still do so on our web site at <https://lwf-fairfax.org/join>. Those members will be reinstated for the current membership year, which ends on June 30, 2021.

LWFVA now has 335 primary members, 60 household members, 29 students, and 28 life members. We appreciate all of you and your commitment to the League of Women Voters!

LWFVA Donors and Supporters

By Lynn Stewart

The LWFVA Board extends an overwhelming thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their amazing support!

January 1 – January 31, 2021

Deborah Adams
 Earnestine Bridges
 Laurie Corkey
 Katharina Gollner-Sweet
 Sonia Greene
 Gloria Hafer
 Aubrey Nye Hamilton
 Joyce Hanson
 Ellen Hayes
 Bette Hostrup
 Carol MacLean
 Vicki Mitchell
 Barbara Nunes
 Lynn Stewart
 Gloria Suslow
 Anne Thomas
 Vivian Watts

Unit Discussion Meeting Locations

Topic: Broken U.S. Treaties

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 February 1, 2020, the following information was correct. Please use phone numbers or emails to advise of your intent to attend. March Unit Meetings will be virtual. The unit leaders will send the login information to every unit member.

Saturday, March 6, 2021

10 a.m. At-Large Unit and Briefing

Contact: Jessica, 301-704-7854 or
jessica.storrs@lww-fairfax.org

10 a.m. Mount Vernon Day (MVD)

Contact: Diana, 703-704-5325 or
Jfdw1111@gmail.com

1 p.m. Oakton/Vienna (OV)

Contact: Mary, 703-932-3665,
mmvalder@aol.com

Monday, March 8

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

Contact: Pat,
pmcgrady308@gmail.com;
Judy, jjsmith64@earthlink.net,
703-342-3353

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

Contact: Bev, 703-451-4438,
rbdahlin@verizon.net
or Sue, 703-266-0272,
sueoneill1@hotmail.com

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

Contact: Wendy, 703-319-4114,
wendy.foxgrage@gmail.com

Wednesday, March 10

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

Contact: Susan, 703-893-2229,
sfcowart@aol.com
or Peggy, 703-772-4939,
peggyknight49@gmail.com

Thursday, March 11

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

Contact: Barbara (703) 437-0795,
bseandlte@earthlink.net

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

Contact: Pat, 703-941-9210,
Pat.Fege@lww-fairfax.org

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

Contact: Jane, 703-960-6820,
jane@hilderwilliams.net
or Susan, 703-587-4790,
scash5002@email.vccs.edu

11:30 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CCD)

Contact: Susan, 703-391-0666,
sadill@cox.net

April Meetings:

Annual Meeting



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

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**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER®
 March, 2021**

Anu Sahai, Co-President
 Nancy Roodberg, Co-President
 Katherine Ingmanson, Editor

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 person at least 16 years old, 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.

Please Support Our Work! The LWVFA Education Fund is supported by donations from our members and the public.
<https://www.lwv-fairfax.org/donate>



LWVFA MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

Dues year is July 1 – June 30

Membership Dues: Individual \$75 _____ Household \$100 (2 persons; 1 Voter) _____ Student (No fee) _____
 (A subsidy fund is available; check here _____ and include whatever amount you can afford.)

Membership Status: New _____ Renewal _____ Reinstatement _____ Donation _____
 (Dues are not tax deductible.)

Tax deductible donations must be written as a separate check or PayPal Payment to “LWVFA Ed Fund.”
 (Please print clearly)

Name _____ Unit (if renewing) _____

Address _____

City _____ /State/ _____ Zip +4 _____

Phone (C) _____ (H) _____ E-mail _____

Please make checks payable to LWVFA. Mail to LWVFA, 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403
 OR Join online at <https://www.lwv-fairfax.org/join>

I am interested in becoming involved in (please indicate by checking the appropriate boxes(s)):

- Providing organization support (graphic 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, etc., 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, or Fairfax County Public Schools).

Other _____