



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ®  
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

# BULLETIN

*Founded in 1925*

*Meeting Continuously Since 1948*

March 2006

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Volume 58 Issue 7

## The Politics of Fear

We all have to make choices in our daily lives and sometimes fear can be a very useful tool to keep us safe. To make critical choices, we need to separate accurate information from rumor and speculation.

Why do we fear a terrorist attack when the greatest threats to our well being lie within our own bodies. We are more dangerous to ourselves on a daily basis than Al Qaeda ever was.

Join us at this month's unit meetings and take part in the discussion of the Politics of Fear.

## Calendar

### March - Women's History Month

04 Briefing

### 8,9,13,14 Units - Politics of Fear

13 Board Agenda Deadline

14 Purim

15 Board Meeting FX Co. Budget Presentation

17 St Patrick's Day

23 Board Meeting/ Apr. UC Letter Deadline

### April

01 April Fools Day

02 Daylight Savings Begin

03 Last Day to Register to vote in City/Towns Elections

04 May Bulletin Deadline/Schools Closed

09 Palm Sunday

### 10 - 13 Unit Choice Meetings

10 Board Agenda Deadline

School Closed/Spring Vacation

13 Passover Begins

14 Good Friday

16 Easter Sunday

17 Schools Reopen

19 Board Meeting/May U. C. Letter Deadline

19 Cities & Towns Voters Guide Published

21 Earth Day

22 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

28 Arbor Day

29-30 LWVVA Council

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## President's Letter

March is Women's History Month, established in 1987 (originally began as a week in 1982) to recognize and honor the many women whose contributions had been overlooked by historians. LWFVA members, mostly from the Prince William Area Unit, will be participating in a Women's History Month Celebration at the Woodbridge campus of NVCC with a voter registration drive on March 14 & 15. A reception on March 24 will feature the story of the women suffragists who were imprisoned at the Occoquan Workhouse.

On March 11, the 2006 Session of the General Assembly will end. The headlines, so far (early February), have been promising on a couple of issues of interest to the League in: allowing localities more control (i.e., relaxing Dillon's Rule) and setting up a nonpartisan commission for decennial redistricting. If only! LWFVA has been active in writing letters and testifying to our delegation about these issues and others—maybe this year it will make a difference!

LWFVA has joined a newly formed coalition called the "School Readiness Network" – its purpose is to support Fairfax Futures' efforts to raise awareness and make targeted financial investments to champion quality early childhood education and school readiness in Fairfax County. I attended the official "launch" of this organization on February 1 at the Capital One campus in McLean, along with representatives of the many member organizations (and individuals) supporting this venture—some funding sponsors are: Booz Allen Hamilton, Capital One, Cox Communications, Freddie Mac Foundation, PNC Bank, and others. For more information go to: [www.fairfaxfutures.org](http://www.fairfaxfutures.org).

And now a word on the topic for March – "Politics of Fear." Susan Dill and her committee have produced a good report about a concept that, although difficult to define, is certainly present in today's political environment. I anticipate very stimulating discussions at our unit meetings this month.

Remember, the LWFVA Annual Meeting, Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Heart-In-Hand Restaurant in Clifton. Your 2006 Annual Meeting Kit will arrive in the mail sometime before March 22—watch for it and mark the

date on your Calendar. *Sherry*

## No. Va. Population Rapidly Growing

Northern Virginia has grown by nearly 14 percent, or about 293,000 people in the past five years, according to annual estimates produced by the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.

Virginia gained more persons than all but six other states, and 60 percent of the state's growth occurred in Northern Virginia, the center found.

Loudoun County, which grew by a "phenomenal" 82,700 people or 49 percent in the past five years, led the trend. Prince William County was close behind with an increase of 74,500 over the period. Fairfax County, though not growing at the same rate, had added 52,400 residents since 2000.

**Source:** *The Washington Post*, January 29, 2006. Metro Section, Week in Review, January 22-28, 2006.

## If You Are Curious...

To access LWFVA's **Special Collection** at George Mason University's Fenwick Library's Archives on the web: Go to: <http://library.gmu.edu> click on: Collections, click on: Spl. Collections & Archives, click on: research cols (left col, 5 down), click on: LWFVA (from list). Then click on: finding guide-research (shows Virginia Heritage - LWFVA with a search box).

Note: In using the search box write out Complete Title (e.g. not ERA but the "Equal Rights Amendment"). Be careful about using abbreviations, possibly even for League levels.

### LWFVA Bulletin © 2006

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**703-658-9150** Information/fax/answering machine

[www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org) E-mail: [lwvfa@ecoisp.com](mailto:lwvfa@ecoisp.com)

President	Sherry Zachry	<b>703-730-8118</b>	<a href="mailto:szachry@aol.com">szachry@aol.com</a>
Editor	Lavinia Voss	<b>703-257-1831</b>	Fax-call first
Proofing	Bernice Colvard	<b>703-978-3227</b>	

Address corrections please email the office or contact 703-658-9150

## Board Notes

Lavinia Voss

At the January 18, 2006 board meeting the following appointments were made: **Baba Freeman** as the second on-board representative and **Nancy Miller** and **Una White** as the two off-board people to complete the 2006 Budget Committee; **Bernice Colvard** as the LWVFA representative on the Federation Citizen's Selection Awards Committee.

The board accepted and approved the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter Treasurer's Report. The nominating committee reported that all was progressing as expected. Membership Director **Leslie Vandivere** gave an update on membership. **Zachry** gave a brief report on the Voters Service opportunities coming up at the Woodbridge NVCC Campus to mark Women's History Month in March. All Board Members will receive invitations to attend the ceremonies on March 24.

**Leslie Vandivere** also spoke and passed out the latest version of debates/forums guidelines for board approval. There was some suggested changes of actual words for the best use of language. These changes were approved.

Program Director **Susan Dill**, following the Program Planning unit meetings in December, recommended we urge LWVUS to do an all-member concurrence on Redistricting based on the work they and some local League's have already done on the subject. She also recommended that LWVFA do a two-year informational local study on Immigration, even though immigration is a LWVUS issue.

### Seen and Heard Around Fairfax and Beyond-

1. President Zachry was quoted in *The Connection Newspapers* on January 10, 2006 regarding her testimony on redistricting given at the GA delegation public hearing at the Fairfax County Government Center.
2. The press release on our January 21<sup>st</sup> General Meeting was printed in *The Connection Newspapers* "Round-ups" and in *The Washington Post* "Fairfax Extra" on January 12, 2006. Two people who read about it in the papers attended and joined our organization (see information on page 4 Membership Update.).
3. President Zachry gave testimony at the Fairfax County Schools' Budget public hearing on Thursday, February 2, 2006.

## Unit News

We reported last month that Connie Houston's (VID) father passed away in early December. Unfortunately, we have to report that her mother passed away before the end of that same month, they had been married 62 years. To quote Connie, "December was not a very good month!" Sally Ormsby (VID) has been appointed chair of the Fairfax County Virginia Community Planning Committee for the 2007 Celebration.

**Thank You!** Edith Appel, Iris Bulls, Muriel Ferris and Therese Martin who made contributions to LWVFA during the last half of 2005.



## Gardening in the Buff

It all started in the early 1970s when organic farmer Jay North and his late wife, Pamela, spontaneously decided to get naked and do some gardening. After that they tilled the land four or five times a week au naturel.

North, who has leased organic farms of varying sizes in California since the 1960s, estimates that at least several thousand Americans have tried nude gardening. The World Naked Gardening Day on **September 10** (proclaimed by North) is his attempt to bolster those numbers. He recommends in-the-buff gardeners avoid cactus and poison oak and points out that any plant can be grown just as well with or without clothes.

His book, *The Windowsill Organic Gardener*, even explains how to garden naked without getting arrested. The American Association for Nude Recreation confirmed that nude gardening is one of its more popular activities.

**Source:** Greenspan, Jesse. "Dispatches," *Audubon* Sep-Oct 2005

*The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

## Membership Update

Leslie Vandivere 703-222-4173

[LVandivere@cox.net](mailto:LVandivere@cox.net)

Now is a great time to recruit new members! Those who join LWVFA after February 1, 2006, will have paid-up membership until June 30, 2007. Talk to your friends about joining today.

We have two new members who joined at the January 21<sup>st</sup> General Meeting: Sheila Coates and Robin Williamson. Judith Kelsey, joined at the LWVUS level and Herman Levy rejoined at that level.

The following LWVVA Members-at-Large living in Prince William County have been transferred to LWVFA: Sarah Casner, Rita Weden, Heidi Whitesel, Beth Adams, Barbara Vanderbilt and Laurel Blumberg. Welcome to you all!

## WORD SEARCH 104

Find and circle 20 "League Lingo" words hidden in the grid below. The words can be found up, down, forward and backward through the grid. Enjoy!

I	P	F	O	R	U	M	T	S	E	P
L	A	S	N	O	I	N	I	P	O	R
E	N	I	L	T	U	O	N	W	A	L
L	I	D	E	A	S	I	U	T	C	A
L	R	E	E	T	N	U	L	O	V	C
A	E	Y	F	I	T	S	E	T	O	I
R	W	W	A	L	Y	B	U	Y	T	T
A	O	M	W	I	C	A	S	B	I	I
P	P	E	M	C	F	O	S	B	N	L
R	M	T	C	A	P	M	I	O	G	O
P	E	I	S	F	G	O	A	L	S	P

Devised by Lavinia Voss

## VIRGINIA HAPPENINGS

Virginia's Black Women Talent Drain

Bernice Colvard, League Historian

After the Civil War, many talented black women left the Commonwealth and attained national fame elsewhere. **Adah B. Samuel Thoms** was born in Richmond in the tumultuous year of 1863. She left Virginia to become a trained nurse, rose to supervisory status and helped organize the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses. In 1912, she was one of three black delegates to the International Council of Nurses meeting in Cologne, Germany.

**Lucy Diggs Slowe** was born in Berryville in 1885 and grew up in Lexington. She left to study in Baltimore and at Howard University. In 1922, Slowe became dean of women at Howard University. She was a founder of the National Council of Negro Women.

Singer **Matilda Sissierette Jones** was born in Norfolk in 1869, left the state in a family move to New England and debuted in New York in 1888. From 1896 to 1916, she led the Black Patti Troubadours, a popular entertainment company playing to largely white audiences.

**Dorothy Maynor** was a soprano, born in Norfolk in 1910. She began singing in her father's Methodist church and studied at Hampton Institute before moving to New York where she debuted in 1939 to critical acclaim. Maynor also sang at Carnegie Hall. She wrote a history of black music which added to the understanding of black spiritual music.

Virginia's two best-known black and truly great singers, **Ella Fitzgerald** and **Pearl Bailey**, were both born in Newport News in 1918. Both left Virginia at an early age. Ella Fitzgerald, raised in a Yonkers, New York, orphanage, began singing professionally in 1934. Pearl Bailey grew up in Philadelphia and began her professional career a year later, in 1935.

### Source:

Kelly, C. Brian with "The Women Who Counted" by Ingrid Smyer. *Best Little Stories from Virginia*. Cumberland House, Nashville, 2003 pp385-6  
Answers to Word Search 104

Bylaw, Forum, I  
Volunteer, Outlin  
Political, Law, A

## LWVVA News

By Lulu Meese, President

The General Assembly's half-way point was February 15, 2006 – also known as “crossover day.” Up to January 31<sup>st</sup>, the 140 Legislators had introduced 2,757 bills and resolutions, and the subcommittees and committees had dealt with one-third of their assigned bills. Up to that day, the legislators consider their own bills and then the legislation is restricted to the other House of the General Assembly for consideration. Many of the bills that were introduced were of particular interest to the League, on such issues as: redistricting, campaign finance disclosure reports, absentee voting and voting equipment, Chesapeake Bay cleanup, and women's and family issues of: domestic violence, the effect of aging population on state agencies, abortion clinic restrictions and emergency contraception, among others.

Also, an alert for all of you: more than a dozen states are considering new laws to protect health care workers who do not want to provide care that conflicts with their personal beliefs. Nine of the states' bills being considered are "right of refusal" bills for workers, hospitals, clinics. Some even allow insurance companies to opt out of coverage.

About half of the bills would shield pharmacists who refuse to fill prescriptions for birth control and ‘morning after’ pills because they believe these drugs cause abortions. Scientists disagree with them, but they continue to hold to their religious position.

The objection to serve could include in-vitro fertilization, the right to die, treatment for AIDS, etc. The right is said to be a "right of conscience" to refuse. We are concerned about patients' rights. Laws to give providers rights may endanger patients by denying them access to legal drugs and treatment.

As a wise person once said, "When one person's rights are taken away, we are all in danger." The League supports citizens' rights to make their own health care decisions in consultation with their doctor. We do not believe these health care decisions should be political ones, subject to legislators' own religious beliefs.

The President and one delegate representing each local League in Virginia is invited to LWVVA Council to be held in Williamsburg on April 29 & 30.

## News from LWVUS

“Meeting in the Middle” is the theme for the 47<sup>th</sup> National Convention to be held from June 10-13 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Information and registration forms have been mailed to all local Leagues. Registration forms must be returned by May 19, 2006. The delegate count will be out shortly.

The February edition of the *National Voter* highlighting the Leagues role globally is in the mail to all members. LWVEF and several other national organizations will sponsor “Sunshine Week 2006: Are We Safer in the Dark?” on March 13, 2006 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. It will be carried via satellite feed to participating libraries around the country.

## NCA NEWS

NCA is planning a **Homeland Security Forum**, entitled “Balancing Homeland Security and Civil Liberties,” on March 25, 2006, from 10:30 a.m. - to 12:30 p.m. in Room 443 of the MLK Library in D.C., directly across the street from the Gallery Place Metro stop. Panelists make presentations, Question & Answer session with audience writing questions to discuss. *Directions to parking area: Go west on H Street. Turn left at Hyatt Hotel and go south on 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn left on G Place. Turn right onto diagonal access path into clean, well-lit, security guarded basement parking.* Contact Andrea Gruhl at [andreagruhl@aol.com](mailto:andreagruhl@aol.com) for more information.

The **NCA Nominating Committee** – is looking for a Vice President, Treasurer and two Directors to serve on their board, plus people to serve on the Budget and the By-Laws committees. Anyone interested in helping, contact Ginny Moore the chair.

The **NCA Annual Meeting**, a breakfast, will be held May 13, 2006 at the Arlington Hilton Hotel & Towers (Ballston Metro Stop). More details will follow as they become available.

The **LWVDC** announced their office has moved to 1717 Massachusetts Avenue NW., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20036.

*Growing old is like being increasingly penalized for a crime you haven't committed.* Anthony Powell

## Politics of Fear

Committee: Susan Dill, Leslie Vandivere and Shirley White.

Politics of fear (POF) is the use of fear as a tool to gain or to maintain power, particularly in the politics of governance.

### Introduction

Fear is a pervasive part of everyday life. We buckle seat-belts, lock doors, get physicals, and stop at red lights. Listening to or reading the news, one could conclude that the country, the world, is full of calamities and “listener beware!” Well-meaning interest groups want their message out: warning of AIDS, the warming globe and the extinction of species, decreasing water on the continent, the shortfall of money in social security for future generations. Interest groups compete for attention and money in order to promote their causes.

Politicians are no different. They want to remain in, or gain, power. POF implies that politicians self-consciously manipulate people’s anxieties in order to achieve their objectives. Occasionally scare tactics are effective in undermining opponents and gaining the acceptance of the general population. However, POF is not only a consequence of political exhaustion and the manipulation of public opinion, but also a force in its own right.

The use of fear to control behavior has been a recognized political tool since the publication of Thomas Hobbs’ *The Leviathan* in 17<sup>th</sup> century England. Fear turns us into children; politically it turns us into the vulnerable, the easily led. Politicians tend to exaggerate threats for their own advantage; but, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century amid all the “noise,” the traditional single threat has morphed into a constant barrage of things to fear. In every single aspect of daily life we are told there is something to fear.

Beds harbor microscopic mites, germs flourish in bathrooms and kitchens, and using the wrong sort of cleaning product could put your family at risk. Use the right toothpaste and you will get the perfect mate; use another brand and you will end up alone. All day and every day our natural fears are manipulated for

“our own good.” Give me money (taxes) and I will solve your transportation problems. Give me your trust and I will keep you safe.

### Thomas Hobbes and the Leviathan

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) was the first proponent of social contract theory, a dominant influence on modern Western moral and political philosophy. He, followed by John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), rejected the then-current view that a sovereign ruled by hereditary or divine right and asserted the belief that all individuals were free. They envisioned rational individuals creating a government by agreeing to cede their individual rights in exchange for peace and safety.

Born in an English coastal village threatened with imminent invasion by the Spanish Armada in 1588, Hobbes lived during a period of extraordinary civil strife, the English Civil Wars. A scholar, tutor, and writer, Hobbes was an associate of Renee Descartes and knew many prominent scientists including Galileo.

His understanding of their work was the basis of his belief that skeptical deductive reasoning resulted in valid scientific theories. He applied the same process to develop his science of natural justice or political philosophy: “. . . theorems of moral doctrine that men may learn thereby how to govern and how to obey.” (Hobbes, Ch. 31, p. 287.)

Hobbes wrote the *Leviathan*, a classic both in English literature and in political thought, in 1651. His thesis is that the primary concern of humankind in a state of nature is self-preservation. Unrestrained competition for survival results in “war of every one against every one” (Hobbes, Ch. 13, p 108) and, “which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

(Hobbes, Ch. 13, p 107.)

Rather than this condition of war, the logical thing to do is to seek peace; but, since each person has the right to do whatever is necessary to preserve one's life, it isn't safe for anyone to give up that right unless everyone does. Hobbes' solution is a social contract in which everyone agrees with everyone else to give up this natural right. Then, everyone is united in a commonwealth. "This is the generation of that great Leviathan . . . to which we owe . . . our peace and defense." (Hobbes, Ch. 17, p. 143.).

Hobbes explains that the essence of the Leviathan or commonwealth is one person. This one person is the sovereign on whom essential rights of sovereign power are conferred to use "as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defense." (Hobbes, Ch. 17, p. 143.)

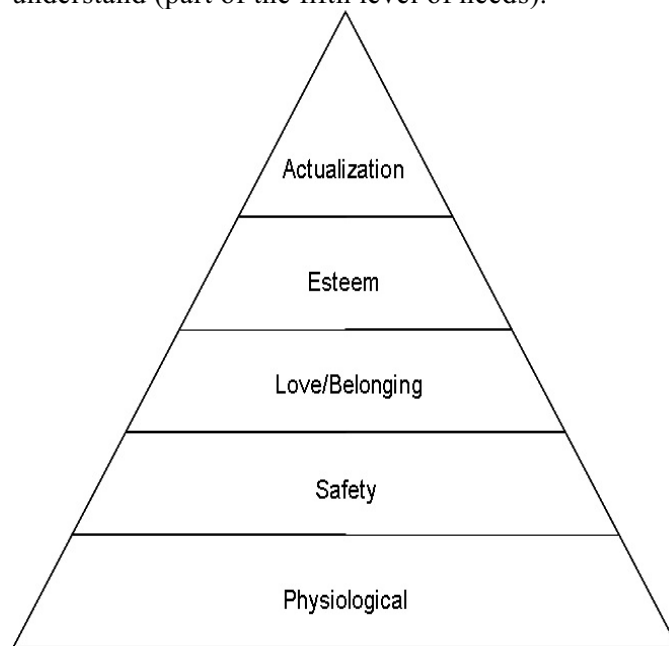
The duty of the sovereign, whether a monarch or an assembly, is to assure the safety of the people. By "safety" is not meant mere preservation, but a state in which all persons, by their own industry, can acquire all the good things they desire without danger or hurt to the commonwealth. The first duty of the sovereign is to maintain the essential rights of sovereignty because, if they are relinquished "the commonwealth is thereby dissolved and every man returns into the condition and calamity of a war with every other man, which is the greatest evil that can happen in this life." (Hobbes, Ch. 30, p. 262.) The sovereign's second duty is to make sure the people understand the reasons and grounds of the sovereign's essential rights so they won't resist him when the commonwealth requires that he use and exercise those rights.

There would be no one to frighten you if you refused to be afraid. **Mohandas K. Gandhi**

### Fear Itself

Fear underlines the fragileness of life. We fear death, power, gods, loss, and the unknown. Webster defines fear as (n) anxiety caused by real or possible danger, pain, etc. and (vt) to expect with misgiving. American

psychiatrist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs lists safety as second of five needs to be satisfied. Maslow's premise is that human behavior is based on deficiency and growth needs. Before growth can be achieved to a higher need, deficiencies must be met. If an individual's needs are achieved to higher levels, and then if a deficiency on the lower level occurs, activity is redirected to satisfy that lower need before maintaining the higher growth need. Our security, personal and otherwise, is a basic instinct. The need for safety must be met before the need to know and understand (part of the fifth level of needs).



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Fear is a physiological event. The primal reaction sets off a chain of physiological events. Facially, eyes widen, the upper lip rises, brows draw together, and lips stretch horizontally. The blood and oxygen is pulled from non-essential areas into large muscle groups. Pain response is suppressed. Adrenalin is released into the body. Fear is also an emotional event, a negative emotion. The first reaction is to back away. It is an unpleasant feeling of risk or danger. Fear can immobilize, especially the reasoning capacity. Rational thinking is unable to take place. On a positive note, fear is an advantage that keeps us from danger.

Public health notices often use fear to obtain compli-



ance for the public good. Wash your hands, use condoms, stop smoking and those famous “this is your brain on drugs” television ads that use the image of frying eggs to grab the attention of a sometimes apathetic public. We all have to make choices in our daily lives and sometimes fear can be a very useful tool to keep us safe. To make critical choices we need to separate accurate information from rumor or speculation.

Mr. President, the only way you are ever going to get this is to make a speech and scare the hell out of the country.

**Senator Arthur Vandenberg, 1947**

### What's Really Scary

What is man's greatest fear: violent death. In actual fact, heart disease and cancer cause over half of all deaths. We are more likely to die of one of these two things than die in a terrorist attack. You are in more danger driving to the supermarket than flying on a plane. With all the information readily available, why do we fear a terror attack when the most deadly form of terrorism we face is within our own bodies? We do more danger to ourselves on a daily basis than Al Qaeda ever did.

Deaths in the US in 2003	
Cause	Percent
Heart Disease	28.00%
Cancer	22.70%
Stroke	6.40%
Lower resp. diseases	5.20%
Accidents	4.50%
Diabetes	3.00%
Influenza/pneumonia	2.70%
Alzheimer's	2.60%
Nephritis/nephrosis	1.70%
Septicemia	1.40%
Suicide	1.30%
Liver disease/cirrhosis	1.10%
Hyper./hyper. renal disease	0.90%
Parkinson's disease	0.70%
Homicide	0.70%
All other causes	17.00%

### Assessing Risk or Rational Decision Making

When assessing risk, most people consider the worst case rather than the probability that the worst case will actually occur. What is rational in today's world? Is it rational to fear a foreign terrorist more than the possibility of poor dietary choices leading to an early death?

The voice of intelligence is drowned out by the roar of fear.

**Karl A. Menninger**

When planning for personal safety, consider the probability of the events you are trying to protect yourself from. Do your concerns arise from reasoned thought or inflammatory rhetoric? Are you well informed about the source of your fear? Is your knowledge based on reliable sources?

### The Leviathan Today

Hobbes's social contract provides a good framework for a discussion of today's politics of fear. The sovereign must constantly remind people of the dangers that will follow if the commonwealth dissolves—a return to a state of nature and war. Today's citizens are frightened into giving up some of their liberty so that they can feel secure. How much power should we grant the Leviathan in exchange for our safety?

During the Clinton Era, talk about “catastrophic terrorism” and “weapons of mass destruction” was common. By the late 1990's, fear about catastrophic terrorism was being used by a variety of political and special interest groups.

The war on terror is frightening. All war is frightening. Any government that has engaged in war has used fear to rally its citizens. Support the war or you will die, or even worse, you might provide comfort or aid to the enemy. “You are either with us or against us” - sound familiar? The current War on Terror maintains us in a constant state of low-grade fear. Will we ever see condition green or are we to live in a constant yellow state?

We all feel vulnerable, but is it necessary to surrender



our privacy to keep us safe? Is this a realistic choice to ask the public to make: privacy or safety? The reference to fear in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a predominant feature of public life since September 11, 2001. POF has been associated with the current administration. POF is the weapon of choice with those who disagree with the White House. It is a tool when ratings decline. Since the 2004 election, opponents frequently portray initiatives of President Bush as examples of the use of fear. January 2005, Democratic Senator Kennedy argued that Bush's policy on Social Security was pushed through using POF. In Great Britain, the Blair government is frequently accused of similar tactics.

The 2004 Bush-Kerry presidential campaign is the best-known campaign for using fear and terrorism to convince the electorate that each candidate would make the best leader and that it would be a calamity to vote for the other candidate. Ads stated that Kerry was weak on national security, intelligence and defense, and other ads said President Bush has made the U.S. unsafe.

Democratic vice-presidential candidate Senator John Edwards accused House Speaker Dennis Hastert of using "politics of fear" when he said al Qaeda terrorists would use an attack to swing the vote to John Kerry's favor. Vice-President Cheney at another time said that "terrorists will strike again" if we make the wrong choice." Voters received ads via speeches and television ads from Bush, Kerry and political groups designed to convince the voter that the world would be more dangerous and that there would be an increase in casualties if the other guy won.

In the campaign in England preceding the 2005 British General Election, commentators adopted POF as a frame through which they interpreted events. The Tory party was criticized by the police association for suggesting that crime had risen in areas where the seats were marginal. Through an open letter, the Archbishop of Canterbury urged that all candidates stop using fear-driven politics. Candidates frequently accused one another of using the fear card.

Politicians lack vision argues Frank Furedi in Politics of Fear. Political jargon is low on specifics and high

in rhetoric. Political vocabulary is designed to obscure the truth and to distract from underlying ideas and that there are no BIG IDEAS. With no vision there is little to change. There is a loss of effectiveness in government. Policies are no longer the result of thoughtful debate but rather the result of fiddling with policies, making little adjustments and thinking that dilemmas are created by global forces and are beyond anyone's control.

There is a pervading sense of underestimating human capabilities. In Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan's time, a feeling that "there is no alternative," known as TINA, implied a lack of choice which in turn indicates the *end of political discussion*. This is fatalistic. The American presidential campaigns of 2000 and 2004 lacked substance. There was no "platform" either by the candidates or the political parties. Peoples' identities and lifestyles have become politicized. Same sex marriage, religion, working parents, and guns have become debate issues. Politicians do not persuade: they sell ads on television.

In the chaos that followed the flooding of New Orleans in 2005, many people wanted the President to send in the military to control the situation. As the populace descended into fear there were calls for strong, forceful leadership. Because of the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, the president was unable to send in the military to enforce civil laws. The Posse Comitatus Act prohibits using the Army to enforce civilian law without a specific act of Congress.

### Conclusion

When applied to politics, fear cancels choice and provides an "either - or" situation. Who do we think will keep us free from terror? If we question current politics, are we giving aid and comfort to the enemy? Does giving up freedom of speech guarantee us freedom from terror? Where do we draw the line? These are difficult questions with no easy answers. Do we understand the political implications of fear?

Fear is a mental and physical reaction. Natural, healthy fear warns us to avoid pain. We fear that which could inflict pain on us by others who wish to harm or kill us. Politically, we fear for ourselves and for our neighbors.

As threats are thrown around with wild abandon, one should remember that there is always an alternative. Even if a choice does not seem readily available, there are always choices and the one we select depends on whether we see ourselves as vulnerable or resilient.

Furedi says we can succumb to a culture of fatalism or we can take a positive approach by believing in human resourcefulness and by engaging in the political process. Only a positive, deliberative approach can effectively respond to the emotional panic created by the politics of fear.

There is a critical need for citizens' voices in this ongoing public discourse and an equally critical need for citizens to act as watchdogs to ensure that the integrity of our democracy is preserved.

**LWVUS President Kay J. Maxwell**

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## U. S. Supreme Court Revisits Redistricting

Therese Martin & LWVVA Redistricting Committee  
On March 1, 2006, the Supreme Court of the United States will hear oral arguments in an atypical two-hour afternoon session. The session is atypical because the Justices rarely hear arguments in the afternoon and also because nearly all oral arguments are scheduled for just one hour. Yet, on the first afternoon of March, the Court will convene to hear four consolidated cases on a topic that has garnered national headlines, the 2003 Texas Redistricting.

An overarching legal question presented by the cases is whether the 2003 Texas redistricting plan is legal, even though it was created solely to build a partisan majority and it was the second round of redistricting using the same census data.

The four cases being consolidated cover the central topics in the contemporary redistricting debate: the validity of partisan gerrymandering, the treatment of minorities under the Voting Rights Act, the legality of drawing unusual districts to deal with minority voters, and limits on the creation of minority-controlled districts. A decisive negative ruling on any of these points would likely invalidate the entire Texas plan.

Supreme Court cases have shaped the redistricting debate for decades, the make-up of the Court has changed since the most recent case, *Vieth v. Juhelirer*, was decided in 2004. Chief Justice John Roberts has replaced the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Justice Samuel Alito has replaced Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Both Rehnquist and O'Connor were in the majority in *Vieth*, ruling that the [Pennsylvania] Democrats failed to show how the court could decide that they had been the victims of unconstitutional gerrymandering. They joined an opinion (written by Scalia) that went farther than the ruling, and stated that partisan gerrymander challenges should be denied judicial review. This critical point failed to receive a majority in *Vieth*, because Justice Anthony Kennedy believed that it might be possible in other cases to find unconstitutional gerrymandering. Given his role in *Vieth* Kennedy is expected to be the judge to watch in the Texas cases. We will closely follow the Supreme Court's arguments and rulings on these cases, as we prepare part II of the study and gear up for possible

action.

**Sources:** "On the Docket" by Medill School of Journalism. <<http://doCKETmedill.northwestern.edu/archives/OO3284.php>>  
Cases: 05-204 by League of United Latin American Citizens, 05-254, by Travis County, 05-276, by Eddie Jackson & other Democratic & minority voters, and 05-439, by GI Forum of Texas. Denniston, Lyle, "Court to hear Texas redistricting cases." <[www.SCOTUSblog.com](http://www.SCOTUSblog.com)> 12/12/05

## Plasma: Not just for TVs

Plasma is a gas in which atoms have been ionized—that is to say, stripped of electrons. Because of that, plasma has magnetic and electric fields that move around rambunctiously and unpredictably, altering their environment. As the environment changes, so does the plasma—a continuous dance of action and reaction. It's usually hot, but it can be cold.

Scientists are still trying to understand the fundamental reasons why it behaves the way it does. Maybe that's why plasma has never had the respect that a full fledged state of matter ought to have.

Plasma could be key to new energy sources. The core of the sun is a plasma denser than lead and so hot—15 million degrees C—that atomic nuclei fuse together there, releasing a huge amount of energy. For many decades scientists have tried to replicate the sun's nuclear fusion feat. They've built reactors that use plasmas heated to tremendous temperatures, but so far they haven't been able to get more energy out than they've put in.

The rockets of the future may be powered by thin beams of highly accelerated plasma. Cold plasma is essential to many industrial operations: For example, it's used to etch the grooves that carry information on the surfaces of computer chips. Mounir Laroussi, a physicist at Old Dominion University, has developed a sort of pencil that shoots out a small stream of cold plasma. It can sterilize equipment that would normally be damaged by heat. Such a device might even be used to disinfect a flesh wound, killing bacteria by blowing out their cell walls without harming other cells.

Plasma makes the fibers in disposable diapers more absorbent and makes ink lettering stick to plastic potato-chip bags. Laroussi says that when he was in high school he never heard about plasma. But there's so much of it in the universe, and it has so many potential uses, that there will come a day, when everyone will know that it's the fourth state of matter.  
**Source:** Achenbach, Joel. "The Fourth State of Matter."

## Action Faction

Jane Hilder

In January, President Sherry Zachry testified to the General Assembly Delegation, that represents Fairfax County/City about the following issues:

- 1) Enacting a dedicated tax to support mass transit.
- 2) Establishing a nonpartisan, independent commission to handle redistricting.
- 3) Relaxing the Dillon Rule to allow local jurisdictions more control of development and taxation.
- 4) Increasing the pay, or allowing a cost of living adjustment, for state employees in the court system who work in Northern Virginia where living costs are higher than in rural areas. This would apply to probation officers, magistrates, and public defenders.
- 5) Making sure that court-appointed attorneys for indigent defendants receive fair compensation comparable to that of neighboring states.
- 6) Ensuring reproductive choice for women in Virginia.

A number of bills were introduced supporting some of the League's positions. We will keep you informed via email of any pending action.

## Katrina/Rita Aftermath

The League of Women Voters of Louisiana Education Fund (LWVLAEF) is kicking off a national effort, the **Bucks 4 Books'** campaign to raise money to purchase textbooks, educational materials and educational equipment for the school districts, which have absorbed the school children from Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, who were displaced due to Hurricanes Katrina/Rita; for the 2005-06 school year.

The LWVLAEF has committed to dedicate 100% of the **Bucks 4 Books'** funds raised in accordance with the guidelines. The funds raised for this project may be used for students displaced from their assigned school district in their community to another school district within the state or in any other state. No administrative fees will be charged against the donations received for this project. Help the children make it through this school year by making your check payable to: League of Women Voters of Louisiana Education Fund, P.O. Box 4451, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-4451.

## Does Your Home Have an Alarm System?

Therese Martin

If the answer is "yes," make sure that your system is registered with the Fairfax County Police Department, pay the registration fee, and avoid false alarms. So stated Debra Olson, head of the False Alarm Reduction Unit with the Police Department, who recently gave a presentation to the Criminal Justice Advisory Board (CJAB).

Ordinances require that alarm companies attempt to verify alarm signals with two individuals before contacting the police. If the police respond to an alarm that proves to be false, they leave a written notice that includes a statement of the ordinance requirements and what home owners must do to avoid fines in the future. Under the new fine structure, a \$50 fee is charged for the third false alarm in a twelve month period. The fee increases until it reaches \$500 for police responses in excess of eight false alarms.

In 2005, there were a total (residential and commercial) of over 72,000 registered alarm users in the county. Of the approximately 22,000 alarms, 95 percent or 21,000, were false alarms, requiring some 14,000 police patrol hours. This level is more than 50 percent lower than it was just several years ago, when the four-person unit was formed and armed with new ordinances, began enforcement procedures and a new outreach program. Although the goal of the unit is not to collect fines (but to reduce the incidents that result in fines), the unit collected about \$1.3 million in fines in 2003 and \$900,00 in 2004.

## Network Against Family Abuse (NAFA)

NAFA met with LWVFA members Bette Hostrup, Judith Leader, and Barbara Nunes. They feel the presence of the League with the Court Watch program has been very helpful. NAFA reported that in the past 2 years, more Protective Orders have been denied. In order to look into this concern, they will specifically watch Protective Orders for 2 weeks in May, hoping this will give them the hard data needed to see if a trend has started. Some NAFA members attended a conference on Domestic Violence. A common theme was the need for training which is one of LWVFA's Positions.



## SAVING THE IVORY-BILLS

If cypress forests continue to be turned into garden mulch, the ivory-billed woodpeckers' prospects for recovery become dim. A growing demand for cypress mulch in recent years has led to increased logging in areas the ivory-bill once roamed, particularly in

Florida & Louisiana.

Much of Louisiana's nearly one million acres of coastal swamp forest is being targeted for logging. Timber companies are buying up as much private property as possible to, in the end, produce small bags of mulch that sell for \$2 a pop at Home Depot, Lowe's, and Wal-Mart. Although cypress is advertised as high-quality mulch, environmental groups say pine bark, pine straw, and even leaves work just as well. A lot of people spend a lot of money [for this mulch], when they could just put down leaves from their own garden.

Among the dozens of animal species besides the ivory-bill that depend on bottomland forests for habitat are black bears, bald eagles, swallow-tailed kites, numerous wading birds, and most eastern neo-tropical migrants. But Louisiana residents also depend on cypress forests as the last line of defense against rising sea levels that have already engulfed more than a million acres of coastal marshes since the 1930s.

Higher water levels flood forests, preventing the growth of new cypress trees because their seeds can't germinate in standing water. A recent report concludes that much of the coastal forest will either never regenerate or will do so only artificially, through replanting. Yet no agency has ever distinguished at-risk forests from those that will grow back naturally.

With the Gulf of Mexico lapping up more than 16,000 acres of Louisiana annually, one U.S. Senate committee drafted the Water Resources Development Act of 2005. It would give the state nearly \$2 billion for coastal restoration. That money is expected to prevent about 60 percent of land losses that would otherwise take place over the next 50 years. But the act also includes a provision that would remove the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' powers to regulate flood hazards and threats to conservation and wildlife in navigable waters on private property. Theoretic-

ally, then, the provision would allow for more logging along lakes, rivers, and the coast. It is absolutely crazy to consider cutting down cypress trees at the same time you're talking about restoring the coast of Louisiana.

**Source:** Greenspan, Jesse. "Gardening for Ivory-Bills" *Audubon*, Sept/Oct 2005

## Greenhouse Gas level Soaring

The level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere today is higher than at any time in the past 650,000 years, according to a study published in the journal *Science*.

By drilling into a deep ice core in East Antarctica and analyzing the content of air bubbles trapped when the ice was formed, a group of European researchers has been able to chart the level of CO<sup>2</sup> in the atmosphere more than 200,000 years further back in time than previous studies.

Their research shows that the level of carbon dioxide, a "greenhouse gas" linked to global warming, is rising 200 times as fast as at any time during the past 650,000 years.

"It's the rate of increase that's alarming," one of the paper's lead authors, Thomas F. Stocker, said in an interview. "These are tremendous changes in the climate system." Stocker, professor of climate and environmental physics at the University of Bern in Switzerland, said the findings will provide a new baseline for computer climate models, allowing scientists to make more accurate predictions about Earth's Changing atmosphere and climate.

He added that through activities such as deforestation and the burning of fossil fuels humans are releasing carbon dioxide "never seen in the atmosphere in millions and millions of years," which helps account for the sudden climate shift.

**Source:** Eilperin, Juliet. *The Washington Post*, Science Notebook, 11/24/05

## Public School Budgets Discussed

By Ginger Shea

How should Fairfax County balance the needs of the school system with the desire to lower the property tax burden to homeowners? This was the main topic of the January 24<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Superintendent's Community Advisory Council. Dr. Jack D. Dale reported that for the third year in a row, enrollment figures are flat, but the percentage of students with special needs is increasing.

In discussing the capital budget, he reported that construction costs are increasing. Due to the multiple hurricanes, suppliers of parts cannot get price guarantees greater than 72 hours; therefore, contractors need to increase their bids to cover potential costs. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will look at both increasing the amount of bond funding for the Capital Improvement Plan and downsizing some construction.

Dr. Dale reported that an analysis of the new building for Glasgow Middle School had determined that enrollment would not be as high as originally projected. Although the new classrooms are bigger than they need to be, there would be no overall cost savings in delaying construction for a year while a new architectural plan was developed. He recommended going ahead with the current expansion plan without modifications.

Dr. Dale also discussed the FY 2007 operating budget of \$2.1 billion he proposed on January 12. This included \$46.5 million for a three percent market scale adjustment for employees. He said this is on the low end of the salary increases being proposed in neighboring school districts; therefore, he was recommending raising this amount by \$4 million for a 3.25 percent increase. The additional 4 million would be made available if the teacher leadership element of the Initiative for Excellence was implemented as a pilot, as recommended by the superintendent. This would leave in place funding for the elements of the Initiative that would raise starting teacher salaries to \$43,050 per year and improve compensation for teachers with master's degrees.

Superintendent Dale had earlier asked the members of the SCAC to check with their constituents on their view on four proposed initiatives and also ideas for cost cutting. There was strong support for higher salaries to make all employees among the highest paid, for their positions, in the region.

The FY 2007 budget proposed adding full-day kindergarten to seven additional schools, for a total of 74 schools. There was discussion of the possibility of providing at least one full-day kindergarten class in all the schools.

Other topics were teacher training and leadership development outside school days with the possibility of moving many teachers to full-time status. A few SCAC members expressed interest in adding foreign language to all elementary school's curriculum; however, a majority said that this was not a priority.

## Domestic Violence

Barbara Nunes 703-451-7238

The Fairfax County Police Department has assigned Domestic Violence detectives at seven of its eight district stations. They are responsible for coordinating services between the domestic violence victim and Victims Services Section. They act as the stations point of contact for inquiries involving Domestic Violence. Another responsibility for the domestic violence detectives includes assisting victims of stalking or telephone incidents. They conduct follow-up investigations including assistance in obtaining Preliminary Protective Orders.

They may obtain photographs of victim's injuries and written statements of what occurred from the victim and witnesses. They interview the suspect and are responsible for service of Emergency Protective Orders and domestic arrest warrants. They assist with transportation of the victim to court and other related locations. They research prior convictions before suspect's court date and obtain certified copies of any prior convictions. They may secure a cell phone and/or alarms for victims.

Fairfax County Police respond to over 10,000 domestic related incidents each year. This includes domestic disputes where no violence occurs. In 2005, the department responded to 4,706 domestic violence incidents and 6,057 domestic disputes. Follow-up investigations numbered 1,351 with 108 warrants served. Court appearances were 384 and a conviction rate of 71% where domestic violence detectives were involved. Detectives were able to do follow-up investigations on approximately 30% of all Domestic Violence incidents.

*Do no dishonor to the earth lest you dishonor the spirit of man.*

*Henry Beston*

## Unit Meeting Locations - Topic: Politics of Fear

Members and visitors may attend any meeting convenient for them. At print time the locations were correct, *please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend.* Some meetings at restaurants need reservations.

Tuesday, March 14

Wednesday, March 8

Thursday, March 9

**9:45 am Annandale/Barcroft (AB)**

Mason District Govt. Center  
6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale  
Call Emily 703-436-9684 for info.

**12:30 pm McLean (McL)**

McLean Community Center,  
Committee Room #2  
1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean  
Call Anne 703-448-6626

**7:45 pm Vienna Evening (VE)**

9516 Rockport Rd., Vienna  
Call Anna Marie 703-938-9336

### Monday, March 13

**1:30 pm Greenspring Vill. (GSV)**

Hunters Crossing Craft Room  
Spring Village Drive, Springfield  
Call Jean 703-569-6659 for info.

Senator Henry L. Marsh, III was a partner in the law firm Hill, Tucker & Marsh in the 1960s and joined the fight against massive resistance. He served on the Richmond City Council from 1966 to 1971 when he won the mayor's seat to become the first black mayor in the city's history. In 1991, he was elected to the Virginia State Senate and is now serving his third term.

**Source:** Virginia Foundation  
for the Humanities

**9:30 am Fairfax Station (FXS)**

7902 Bracksford Ct. Fairfax Station  
Call Lois 703-690-0908 for info.

**9:30 am Hollin Hills Day (HHD)**

Mt. Vernon District Gov. Center  
2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria  
Call Joan 703-765-0799 for info.

**9:30 am Vienna Day (VID)**

7408 Spring Valley Dr. #T01  
Springfield  
Call Carol 703-644-4214 for info

**1:00 pm Pr. William Area (PWA)**

Chinn Park Regional Library  
13065 Chinn Oak Dr.  
Prince William, VA.  
Call Sheila 703-492-4574 for info.

**6:15 pm Dinner Unit (DU)**

Yen Cheng Restaurant, Main St.  
Center, 9992 Main Street, Fairfax  
Call Pier 703-256-1019 for info.

**7:30 pm Pr. William Area (PWA)**

Daks Restaurant  
13641 Minnieville Road, Dale City  
Come at 6:30 pm for dinner.  
Call Gladys 703-494-8027 for info.

**7:30 pm Reston Evening (RE)**

Reston Museum 1639 Washington  
Plaza, Lake Anne Village Center  
Call Therese 703-471-6364 for info.

**9:00 am Reston Day (RD)**

2255 Double Eagle Ct., Reston  
Call Reni 703-716-2560 for info.

**9:15 am Fairfax City Day (FXD)**

10912 Warwick Ave., Fairfax  
Call Jeanne 703-591-4580 for info.

**9:30 am Springfield (SPF)**

Packard Center (Lg. Conf. Rm.)  
4026 Hummer Rd, Annandale  
Call Nancy 703-256-6570 or  
Peg 703-256-9420 for info.

**1:00 pm Chantilly/Herndon (CHD)**

Sully District Governmental Center  
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.  
Call Olga 703-815-1897 for info.

**7:45 pm Hollin Hills Eve. (HHE)**

Martha Washington Library,  
6614 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria  
Call Alice 703-360-7426 for info.

### April Unit Meetings Unit Choice

