



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

Fairfax Voter

December 2007

(Formerly *LWVFA Bulletin*)

Volume 60, Issue 4

Program Planning for LWVUS & LWVFA 2008-2010

Maintaining Our Grass Roots Identity



It is that time of year again – program planning! Think about LWV program on the national and local levels. Do our long-standing positions still have relevance? Can they be more effective if reworded or re-studied? Are there issues that need the League’s voice; and if so, should we embark on new study?

The LWV derives its strength from being embedded in and reflective of member interest. So tend to your “grassroots,” plan our programs for the next two years and send a message to your local and national Leagues.

Calendar

November

- 21 Board Meeting (back to regular. day)
- 28 LWVUS Event at National Press Club,
9am-3pm

December

- 04 January Bulletin Deadline
- 05 WRT Pre-Session Richmond
- 05 1st day of Hanukkah-begins at sun
down on 4th
- 07 NCA Board Meeting
- 10-13 Unit Meetings: Program Planning
(LWVUS & LWVFA) – facilitated by
Board Members
- 19 Board Meeting/Jan. UC Letter Dead
line
- 24-Jan. 1 School Vacation/Office Closed
- 25 Christmas Day

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The Acting President's Message

Take advantage of the printed word and the Internet. It's all about communication!

Our Bulletin has a new name, the Fairfax Voter. The LWVUS has encouraged Leagues at all levels to incorporate the word "Voter" in the title of their newsletters. The LWVFA Board voted in October to make the name change and we will eliminate the "formerly LWVFA Bulletin" message in the masthead in a few months. We hope you like the new title. Some uniformity in newsletter titles helps enhance the identity of the League as a national organization and pays homage to our roots in the women's suffrage movement.

Speaking of women's suffrage, do you know about the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum on Capitol Hill in DC? Find out about this interesting place and a wonderful series of educational forums sponsored by the LWVUS and Sewall-Belmont entitled "The Changing Faces of Power: Women in Politics" by going to www.lwv.org.

This month, our unit conversations focus on League itself with program planning at the national and local levels. As I was preparing the study section, I read through our national and local positions and was gratified and proud about the variety and depth of the League's work. I urge you again to "go on line" to read the LWVUS positions that are found in *Impact on Issues*. The study portion of this *Fairfax Voter* tells in detail how to access this document. Last but not least, take out your *Here We Stand*, borrow a copy from your unit chair if you don't have one, or go to lwv-fairfax.org and find our local positions under "FFX in Action." You'll enjoy the December meeting having a deeper appreciation of program than what we are able to communicate in six pages. After examining our many program options and making your voice heard at unit meetings, I hope you all have a joyful holiday season.

Mary Grace

LWVFA Welcomes Our Newest Members

By Leslie Vandivere, Membership Director

Please welcome the following new members:

- *Carolyn Onufrak, GSP,*
- *Joyce Post, FXS,*
- *Jean Kaminsky, GSP, and*
- *Melissa Fitzgerald, RD.*

We're glad to have the following new members who joined at the national level:

- *Ethel Bungard,*
- *Marjorie Lane,*
- *Kathy Luetkemeier,*
- *Diane Beatley, and*
- *Mary Dean*

Do you know someone who would make a great League member? Invite them to join! Pass his or her name and contact information on to your Membership Director at LVandivere.cox.net or 703-222-4173. We'll send your friend a packet of League information and the next two issues of the Fairfax Voter.

LWVFA Fairfax Voter 2007

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

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

FIRST CALL TO LWVFA's 2008 General Meeting & Luncheon

10:00 AM, Saturday, February 9, 2008

International Country Club on Highway 50 in Chantilly

Mark your calendars! Reservation form in January Fairfax Voter.

Domestic Violence Statistics Under Review by Fairfax County

By Barbara Nunes
Chair, Domestic Violence Committee

The Virginia Code gives domestic violence teams authority to review facts and circumstances surrounding fatal family violence incidents. In Fairfax County, family and intimate partner homicides for 1999-2003 were: 10 family deaths, 16 intimate partner deaths, 5 intimate partner associated deaths, and 9 child deaths by caregivers. Preliminary figures for 2004-5 show: 3 family deaths, 5 intimate partner deaths, 3 intimate partner associated deaths, and 2 child deaths by caregivers.

Fairfax County adopted the Domestic Violence (DV) Fatality Review, with the Commonwealth's Attorney and Police Department taking the lead, at the October 15, 2007, board meeting. The team includes DV service providers, Commonwealth Attorney and Assistant Commonwealth attorneys, law enforcement officers, social service providers, mental health providers, health care professionals, battered service providers, school representatives, judges, magistrates, public defenders, probation and parole officers.

Fatality review examines DV injuries and deaths to evalu-

ate how the present systems are working and how they could be improved and do better. Retrospective exams of death records have been conducted by a multidisciplinary team in order to understand precise circumstances of fatal events and injuries, and to identify specific interventions that would reduce similar deaths in the future. All information and records are confidential and are excluded from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Such information or records shall not be subject to subpoena, etc.

The reviews will enhance inter-agency collaboration and learning, build inter-agency trust, create innovative approaches to domestic violence, and make domestic violence a priority in Fairfax County.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STATISTICS

- 5.3 million women are abused each year.
- There are 1,500 shelters for battered women in the United States. There are 3,800 animal shelters.
- In 1991 at least 21,000 domestic crimes were reported against women every week.
- Intimate partner violence made up 20% of all non-fatal violent crime experienced by women in 2001.
- Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by either husband or boyfriend in the past year.
- From 1993-1998, 22% of all female victims of violence in the United States were attacked by an intimate partner.

Information from: "NOVACO Key Chain," Fall 2007, www.novaco.org



Lorraine Hart and Sherry Zachry provided election information to folks participating in the festival.

Among Several Outreach Events

Voter Information Distributed at Clifton Day

By Lorraine Hart, Outreach Director

A very successful outreach event and membership drive was held at Clifton Day in the historic town of Clifton on Sunday, October 7. A BIG thank you to Lois Page and Marilyn Hedges and their Fairfax Station unit for making this possible. The day was so very hot that we were grateful for the canopy and for the cold water and treats furnished by Lynne Wark.

This outreach effort was among a number of LWVFA events to reach out with voter and membership information. Another major event was "Fall for Fairfax," held at the Government Center on September 29th and also overseen by Hart and her committee.

League Testifies at Public Housing Hearings

By Jane Hilder, Action Director

Mary Grace Lintz, in her new role as Acting President of LWVFA, and I as Action Director, each testified during the last month at public hearings of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on behalf of an initiative to encourage workforce housing in new high-rise construction in the county. The plan the BOS considered was developed over 18 months by the High-Rise Affordability Panel to try to find ways to leverage workforce affordable units

See **Testifies**, Page 7, Col 1

VIRGINIA HAPPENINGS: PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE - III

By Bernice Colvard, League Historian

(This is the third and final article in the series on the Public Health Service.)

Virginia has 119 local health departments divided into 35 health districts. Some are single entity districts, such as Alexandria. Others cover multi-jurisdictions, such as Fairfax, which includes Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. The Fairfax Health District Director is Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu.

Born of the tragedies of September 11, 2001, as well as subsequent events (Anthrax, avian flu), today's focus is on preparedness and response. The Emergency Preparedness & Response Division of the Virginia Dept. of Health has enabled local health districts to enhance their programs. Each health district now has an emergency preparedness planner and an epidemiologist for disease surveillance and investigation. They maintain close working relationships with local governments, hospitals and medical providers. This has made possible effective disease surveillance in the community and the development of plans for particular dispensing sites for vaccinations and medications.

The Fairfax County Health Department in cooperation with the Fairfax County Citizens Corps Council is continuing to develop a volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is designed to augment the capacity of the public health system to respond to large-scale events related to bio-terrorism or widespread epidemics. Despite its title, many volunteers come without a medical background for logistical, planning, and implementation. Training is, of course, provided. A possible scenario might entail dispensing the school bus fleet to convey residents to a central location (such as the local high school) in each part of the County for vaccinating or medicating. This would, obviously, be a complex operation. Many volunteers are required to carry out these programs. For more information, see the Health Dept. webside (below) or call 703-246-2433.

Sources:

<www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd> 12/23/2006

BeLer, Constantine, Dean. "Partners on the Front Line." The Virginia News Letter, August 2006.

Leaguers to Offer Suggestions for National and Local Program for 2008 -2010

By: Mary Grace Lintz and Lois Page, Program Co-directors

The Fairfax Area League of Women Voters does program planning each year. Local and national topics are considered in December of odd-numbered years; regional and state in even-numbered years. As a national organization, this is how we maintain our grassroots identity. Programs are generally adopted for a two-year period.

“Program” is a core component of the League’s mission and is composed of program planning, study and consensus, and advocacy. The Program Planning process is an important League tool for identifying issues for study. It gives members a chance to balance pros and cons, assess possible support, consider the viability and timeliness of an issue, and to decide if governmental action is the best way to address the problem.

Current LWVUS Positions Under Review

As we consider current LWVUS positions (see Public Policy Positions below) we should think about the issues and the potential resources needed. Estimated costs are given in terms of Per Member Payments or PMPs. Each local League is assessed a PMP to support LWVUS activities. Currently the LWVFA pays \$26.80 PMP for each local member. While the LWVUS does seek grants to sustain studies, if grant funds are not forthcoming, local Leagues must pitch in.

For the 2008-2010 LWVUS program planning biennium, we may:

- 1 - Review LWVUS positions but recommend no change.
- 2 - Select a position for consideration for review/update. If a position is adopted nation-wide for review, a Review Committee will be appointed to examine the position and, if appropriate, suggest changes and updating. (depending on the amount of updating necessary, this could require a PMP increase of \$.80 - \$2.00 for one year)
- 3 - Propose a program item for concurrence. Concurrence is a process where members agree or disagree with a position statement, often an existing local or state League position. A concurrence recommendation must be supported with a title and scope of the position, as well as the name of the League that did the original study. (this could require a PMP increase of \$1.20/year for one year).
- 4 - Propose a new study giving a brief summary of the scope

of the study under the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources or Social Policy (this may require a PMP increase of \$3.00/year for two years).

We should also think of the following which applies to new studies at any LWV level:

- Can the issue be resolved by government action? At what level?
- Does the League have a position at any level that could address the specific issue?
- Can the League’s involvement make a difference?
- Is there enough enthusiasm for the topic?
- Do we have the people to work on this?

After the December unit meetings, the LWVFA Board will consider all unit recommendations and make our report to LWVUS by the February 1, 2008 deadline. The 2008-2010 LWVUS program will be adopted at the June, 2008 convention.

Complete and detailed Public Policy Positions can be found on the LWVUS website: www.lwv.org. After accessing the website, click on “Library,” click on *Impact on Issues* (beneath Online Store). You can select any part of the document to read, or download the entire text in a PDF version. (A summary of current LWVUS Public Policy [Program] Positions follows.)

LWVUS Public Policy Positions

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT - Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote - Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting

Representation - Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment - Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance - Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President - Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct popular vote and work to abolish the Electoral College. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation - Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties - Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices - Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress - Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency - Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS -- Promote peace in an interdependent world by working

cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations - Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade - Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries - Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control - Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending - Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES - Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources - Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management - Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control - Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality - Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy - Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use - Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources - Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management - Promote policies to reduce the

generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues - Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation - Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy - Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY - Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights - Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing - Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy - Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit - Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements - Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care - Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Meeting Basic Human Needs - Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance - Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services - Provide for essential support services.

Housing Supply - Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care - Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk - Support policies and programs that promote the well-being, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention - Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control - Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy - Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty - The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

Note: Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

Another Look At LWVFA (Local) Program for 2008-2010

To arrive at local positions, we study the subject, and in group discussions, answer questions from which consensus/concurrence reports are made. The program team makes a recommendation for the exact wording of the position. The board then makes any changes it thinks appropriate (after reviewing the consensus reports). The approved wording is sent to the membership for consideration at least a month before the respective LWVFA Annual Meeting.

The position is either accepted or rejected at the Annual Meeting. Once accepted, the language cannot be changed substantially; nor can a portion, or all, of the position be dropped until another Annual Meeting and appropriate notice of the proposed change is given. Editorial changes can be made if they do not substantially change the position. This process ensures that positions reflect membership thinking.

You may evaluate our full current positions by referring to

your copy of *Here We Stand*. This document can be accessed on the LWVFA website: www.lwv-fairfax.org, under “FFX in Action.” Your Unit Chair has a copy of *Here We Stand*. The current LWVFA Positions in Brief are printed on the following pages.

LWVFA Positions in Brief

(*Updated 11/2007)

GOVERNMENT

Fairfax County & City of Fairfax - Support an effective, responsible and accountable form of government that includes opportunities for citizen participation in the decision-making process by scheduling time for public comment at board and council meetings and holding magisterial district town meetings in the county. Support for the concept of an independent auditor for program review.

Fiscal* - Support of an effectively administered, equitable tax system and the sale of bonds for capital improvements. If additional revenue is needed, and in order to diversify the tax system and reduce reliance on the property tax, a combination of adjusting the rates on existing taxes and/or fees and enacting new taxes and/or fees should be considered.

Public Libraries* - Support for selection policies and procedures of the Fairfax County Public Libraries (FCPL) that ensure its collection contains a wide variety of books, digital resources, and other materials representing a diversity of views to serve the educational, informational and recreational needs of the residents of Fairfax County/City.

Transportation - Support of an effective, well-coordinated and adequately financed system of public transportation in Fairfax County/City, and an active role by Fairfax County in the planning of its road system and the financing of road improvements

Voting Procedures - Promote efforts to increase voter participation in Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax. Support additional hours and expanded use of appropriate public places for voting and voter registration

NATURAL RESOURCES

Environmental Quality (E.Q.)

Solid Waste - Support measures to protect the public and the environment and to encourage alternative methods of disposal of solid wastes. Source reduction, as well as reuse and recycling, should be emphasized over incineration and

land filling.

Hazardous Materials - Support establishment and maintenance by Fairfax County and Fairfax City of a comprehensive local hazardous materials program, including safe disposal of hazardous waste, to protect the public and environment.

Sensitive Areas - Non-tidal wetlands are a valuable resource that is in need of protection from destruction by conversion to other uses. Both tidal and non-tidal wetlands should be protected against damage from sedimentation and pollution.

Air Quality - To achieve and maintain acceptable air quality, development of less polluting alternative fuels should be a high priority with preference for compressed natural gas, reformulated gasoline, electricity and hydrogen. Support for a change in parking subsidies away from those favoring low occupancy vehicles to those favoring efficient transportation modes.

Land Use Planning - Support for well-coordinated and environmentally sound comprehensive land use planning in Fairfax County/City, efforts to ensure that growth is balanced and orderly, preservation of historic and archaeological sites and areas, coordinated revitalization and redevelopment, and coordination of land use and transportation planning.

Water - Support Fairfax County's taking necessary measures to effectively protect the Occoquan Reservoir from pollution

SOCIAL POLICY

Health Care - Support for Fairfax County's playing a role in the health care of its citizens, which should include participation in programs that subsidize health care for the medically indigent through private physicians and primary care clinics placed in appropriate locations. Support for an aggressive, community-based out-reach program to inform the public about available health care programs

Human Services - Support equal opportunity for education, employment and housing; promote provision of services for the elderly; work to ensure adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for low-and moderate-income families and individuals; support a wide range of housing arrangements for mentally disabled adults; support permanent shelters for homeless families and individuals.

Judicial System - Promote an effective local judicial system which is conducted in a just and dignified manner, ministers to all people without discrimination, is properly planned and coordinated with related agencies, is efficiently

administered by competent personnel who are given a clear assignment of responsibility, and is adequately financed.

Juvenile Problems - The major goal of the Fairfax Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court should be the protection and rehabilitation of problem youth. Support for alternatives to detention and a variety of individual and group homes located throughout the county, in preference to institutions. These facilities should provide for separation of various types of juveniles according to their individual needs.

Schools - Promote equal opportunity for a quality education in Fairfax County/City schools. Support of proper planning, competent administration and programs to meet special needs; and support for adequate personnel, facilities, financing and appropriate books and materials to support and enhance the instructional program.

* * *

After Unit discussion, mark your unit choices in the grid printed on the following page.

LWVFA new program ideas gathered from various sources, listed in no particular order:

- Housing for an Aging Population
- Proffers, the Back End of the process
- Emergency Preparedness
- An EQ Potpourri
- Mental Health Services – What’s going on locally?

Discussion and Concurrence on School Bond Funding

In addition to program review, the LWVFA board recommends consideration of the following for concurrence. Per our concurrence process, members first discuss the item at unit meetings and indicate agreement or disagreement. If there is substantial support, then the item is presented for concurrence at Annual Meeting.

The LWVFA has a Schools position [under SOCIAL POLICY] in support of bond funding for school facilities which reads:

“[The LWVFA supports] A policy of borrowing money through issuing bonds to finance a program of school facilities construction and renewal. Borrowing for school construction and renewal should be consistent with overall County/City fiscal policy and with the implementation of a

coordinated capital improvement program.”

The LWVFA has had a *Fiscal* position [under GOVERNMENT] supporting the general use of bond funding for facilities construction. The position reads:

“The LWVFA believes that the sale of bonds by political jurisdictions is an appropriate method of financing capital improvement. Factors to be considered when evaluating proposals for bond funding include:

- Whether the project is included in the Capital Improvement Program;
- Whether the project addresses a high-priority need;
- Whether the cost is greater than can be financed from the General Fund;
- Whether the life of the facility is at least equal to the payback period of the bonds;
- Whether it is appropriate for future users to share the cost of the facility; and
- The fiscal impact of the bonded indebtedness on the County/City budget.”

The board believes that having a separate schools bond support position is redundant and proposes the following: Delete the “bond funding for schools”[wording] from the current schools position. Change the first sentence of the GOVERNMENT/Fiscal position to read [new language in bold]:

“The LWVFA believes that the sale of bonds by political jurisdictions is an appropriate method of financing capital improvement, **[including the construction and renewal of school facilities.]**”

After discussing this recommendation please indicate agreement or disagreement with this change on the grid (next page, last line).

Explanation of terms in heading of the grid:

Retain - Assumes there is still member understanding of, and agreement with, the position.

Restudy - Implies the position no longer fits the circumstances and needs to be completely restudied.

Update - Implies there is new information available or things have changed. The position could be expanded to include the new info through consensus/concurrence to

produce a reworded position.

Action - Would like to see more individual and/or League action taken on this position.

**Please Remember to Attend Your
Unit Meeting and
Express Your Opinions.
They Count!**

Please indicate (x) your units recommendations in the appropriate column.

GOVERNMENT	Retain	Restudy	Update	Drop	Action
Fairfax County & City of Fairfax					
Fiscal					
Public Libraries					
Transportation					
Local Registration & Election Procedures					
NATURAL RESOURCES					
Environmental Quality					
·Solid Waste					
·Hazardous Materials					
·Sensitive Areas					
·Air Quality					
Land Use Planning					
Water					
SOCIAL POLICY					
Health Care					
Human Services					
Judicial System					
Juvenile Problems					
Schools					
School Bond Funding moved to GOV'T/Fiscal	Agree:		Disagree:		

If recommending an update or restudy of a current position, list the title of that position and explain why, how, and what changes your unit would like to see in the position (use another sheet if necessary).

New informational program topics: Include any topics in addition to those listed above, prioritize two from your unit, and list below:

1. _____

Scope: _____

2. _____

Scope: _____

Provide the names of people willing to work on these topics.

Update on Subsidized Housing in Fairfax County

By Anne Thomas,
Affordable Housing Committee Chair

On September 30, 2007, *The Washington Post* published an article titled "Some in Fairfax Public Housing Make Six Figures." The first two paragraphs of the article were inaccurate and misleading. The rest of the article did accurately portray who is living in subsidized housing and that very few tenants exceed the qualifying income. These tenants initially qualified but started earning higher incomes while living there. Mary Stevens, Deputy Director of the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA), stated that the Housing Authority does encourage those whose incomes rise above qualifying levels to move on.

RHA presented the following information to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in response to *The Washington Post* article:

The Housing Authority Is Meeting Its Mission

- 99% of Public Housing is occupied by those with low or moderate incomes
- 1% of the residents have incomes which have increased over time and are now at levels where they need to move on.
- The median income in Public Housing is \$16,404; half living in Public Housing have very low incomes

The FCRHA Has Been Proactive and Is Now Requiring that those with Higher Incomes Move On

- The FCRHA adopted a policy in March that will require those residents in Public Housing whose incomes have risen to above the area median income to move out.
- Eleven households fall into this category.
- The FCRHA adopted this policy 27 months after HUD rules allowed it (not 5 years like the article suggests).

If Incomes Go Up, Rent Goes Up

- As incomes rise, residents are required to pay more in rent, up to market rent.

The Housing Authority Encourages Those with Higher Incomes to Become Homeowners

- We provide homeownership workshops and have even set up Homeownership Clubs for our residents.
- We have not tracked the move to homeownership as well as we would like, but for those properties where we have, 50% of those leaving have moved on to homeownership.

- We are looking to work with 45 public housing residents over the next three years to help them move them on to homeownership.

Incomes Rise Over Time—That is the Good News

- Rising incomes in Public Housing in Fairfax means that our residents are working and becoming self-sufficient. We do not have a "welfare culture" in our Public Housing.
- Incomes rise when individuals marry; when children grow up and get jobs; and as individuals move from a job to a career.

We Are Following the Rules, Not Making Them

- Federal rules do not allow individuals to be kicked out when their incomes rise. They do allow their rent to rise, which is the case in Fairfax.
- New HUD rules for Public Housing do allow a ceiling income and the FCRHA has adopted this policy.
- In cases where there are only County funds involved (no federal funds), the FCRHA has also adopted a ceiling income policy.

Should FCRHA Housing All Be Reserved for Extremely Low Incomes?

- High concentrations of the very poor have proven to be devastating to cities throughout the country. In fact, HUD has spent millions tearing down this type of public housing and creating mixed income communities. Fairfax County's Public Housing is accepted in its neighborhoods because we strive for a mix of income.

In the Spotlight . . .



Lorraine Hart, Voter Service
Director - Outreach

Lorraine Hart grew up near Newport, South Wales [U.K.] where she graduated from Pontllanfraith Grammar School. She worked for the Inland Revenue before attending Sussex University in Eastbourne where she obtained her teaching diploma and taught high school in London and Leicester.

See **Spotlight**, Page 8, Col 1

Unit Members Provide Feedback on Affordable Housing Study

By Lois Page, Program Co-director

Following is a summary of feedback from the September unit meetings on Affordable Housing.

Units seemed to enjoy the topic, with the possible exception of Greenspring, who felt it wasn't of much interest to them [understandably so]. Several units suggested a chart of acronyms might have been a good addition to the study since there were so many involved.

Several units suggested follow up studies especially regarding affordable housing for senior citizens. As one unit put it: "There was vigorous support for more housing for the elderly. Most felt they didn't want a bunch of isolated communities but mixed in. Housing for elderly must be close to transportation, hospitals, shopping. We have been surprised that some of the new town centers being discussed such as in Annandale and Merrifield do not mention elderly housing. Many felt they were being pushed out of the County, after passing their good working years here. Not everyone wants to move to North Carolina. Very few Medicaid beds are available in the existing elderly housing."

As for the status of this as a local study, one unit said, "We felt strongly that local government should be involved in affordable housing and subsidized housing as it affects the life style of all of us and if the local government doesn't act, who will?"

Units posed a number of questions which have been passed on to the committee. The committee will make every effort to answer the answerable ones in upcoming Bulletins. One unit felt follow up articles are especially needed in light of the housing and credit crunch.

Questions Raised by September Unit Meetings

1. Group had trouble finding answers to questions #6 (What incentives do businesses have to create/provide affordable housing?) in the study.
2. Someone wanted to know whether the Kate and Allie Ordinance applied only in Affordable Housing. That was not crystal clear.
3. Group would like to know more concerning the

conversion of single family units to multifamily units (how is this handled?)

4. In terms of the immigration consensus, what type of information and studies had been done on the use of single family houses by immigrant as boarding homes and unofficial motels.
5. We did wonder what is going on in Tyson's Corner, housing-wise?

Suggestions for Further Programs on the Subject

1. No mention of employer-subsidized housing except asking for incentives. Is there land enough to handle this? The study had little info re homeless and disabled. Perhaps we should deal in poverty in Fairfax County generally.
2. What other programs assist with middle class housing needs? Spell out public-private partnerships in the area of affordable housing. A map listing affordable housing locations would be helpful. Unit members wanted to know whether transportation - bus and metro - were accessible to existing and planned affordable housing.
3. For question 10 (what innovative ideas should (could) localities use to promote affordable housing?), a lottery for new condo units with eligibility rules for participation.
4. One problem we felt added to the housing bust was the lack of oversight on mortgage companies. This at least is something that can be addressed fairly easily. The other issues such as greedy "house flippers" and the huge gap between supply and demand are a bit more difficult.
5. Businesses need to be aware of the impact of not having housing for the workforce. Not only will there be a crunch for government workers, but their own work force will have trouble.

See **Feedback**, Page 7, Col 1

Feedback, cont'd from Page 6

6. Are there priorities on WHO gets housing? Elderly, disabled, 1st time single family? Homeless? Workforce? School children of the homeless? Who is eligible and how do you rise on the list? How many are left out? Debate on Affordable vs. Workforce Housing. This may effect the financing. LWVFA could act on new initiatives for preventing homelessness or on Citizen Task Force Initiatives. How do we take action to decide what local action to address? We have broad positions – where do we begin with ACTION Lobbying?
7. One question – we understand that owners of affordable housing have a covenant with a control period of

30 years so that the house is not sold at market price during that time. The question – how are the local real estate taxes calculated? Is the appraised value at the true market value or at the “affordable housing” market value. If the house is sold while under the covenant, is any equity given to the buyer or is the price of the house a set amount during the covenant period? This study focused on rentals and not owner housing. More on owner housing would be interesting.

8. We suggest use of multi-family housing or boarding houses (objection – not in my backyard!) We need to study need for provision of senior housing – could be public/private financed.

Testifies, cont'd from Page 4, Col 1

in private developments, without any county subsidy.

Developers would receive a density bonus if they achieved 12% workforce affordable housing. The units would stay in the workforce affordable range for 30 to 50 years. There would be maximum income limits of 120% of the median family income for the household size in the DC metropolitan area. The units might be either apartments or condos in mixed use centers or developments near transit stations. The goal of this program is not to provide housing for the working poor, as those households with incomes below about 70% of the median would probably not be able to afford these units. But it is considered to be a type of housing Fairfax needs in order to allow more moderate income households to find housing in the county. The content of our testimony is posted on the LWVFA website. The BOS did pass the changes to the comprehensive plan and to the zoning ordinance that would encourage such housing. Single family and townhouse developments already have some incentives for supplying affordable housing in their projects.

At the September 24 meeting the Supervisors heard the Gang Prevention Status Report from Bob Bermingham, Gang Prevention Coordinator. He was encouraging about the positive effects of the expansion of middle school after-school programs. Bermingham noted that Fairfax County Police have had good success with suppression of gang activity, while the gang prevention and intervention efforts have been beefed up with new programs. He noted that gang crime has decreased as enrollment increased at middle school after-school programs. In 2006 gang-related crime decreased 32% from 2005. Gang-related crime

has decreased faster than violent crime overall. There is a new Gang and Youth Violence Referral line that operates 24 hours with bilingual capability. Bermingham did urge the BOS not to lose their focus on the gang problem just because the situation has gotten somewhat better.

At the October 15 BOS meeting, Chairman Connolly noted the first case of a landlord being fined and sent to jail for operating an illegal boarding house in Fairfax County. Also the Board celebrated all Fairfax Connector buses being equipped with bike racks. The BOS approved a zoning change to support the redevelopment of the Merrifield area as a town center. Several developers committed to providing some affordable dwelling units and workforce housing in their projects (a total of 12%), without having the incentive of a density bonus.

News from NCA and Other Leagues

Compiled by Sherry Zachry, Fairfax Voter Coordinator

Following are some notes we've received from the Leagues of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA), of the United States (LWVUS) and of Virginia (LWVVA).

NCA and US (by Melpi Jeffries, President, LWVNCA, melpijeffries@msn.com):

See **Other Leagues**, Page 8, Col 1

Other Leagues, cont'd from Page 7, Col 2

- The **NCA-sponsored** performance of the Capitol Steps on Sept 28, 2007 was a fun-filled, sell-out and an opportunity for our local leagues to mingle.
- At the NCA Annual President's Brunch, on Friday, October 5, 2007, Jeanette Senecal, LWVUS Director Elections/E-Democracy, brought us up to date on the impressive **LWVUS Election activities** and had some exciting news. The LWVUS Board has agreed to have the LWVUS staff obtain and prepare voters' guide information about the Presidential candidates for use by all local leagues in on-line and/or printed *Voters' Guides* for both the Primary and General Elections for 2008. The issue was a "Direction to the Board" at the NCA Annual Meeting and the subject of a successful petition to the LWVUS Board, drafted and submitted by LWVMD (Maryland) with support from, LWNCA, LWVVA and many attendees at LWVUS Council in June, 2007.
- The **LWVUS voter outreach** and education projects include: VOTE 411.org, the League's national voter website in conjunction with Yahoo; revision of several League voter service publications; and partnerships with TodaysMama, Smackdown your Vote, the National Cable Organization and XM Radio.
- Finally, **LWVNCA** will be celebrating the League's Birthday on **February. 14, 2008** by sponsoring a

free tour of the Library of Congress for two groups of 20 (40 in all) from 10:30 to 1:30 pm, which will include the research library in the Madison Building. Save the date, details will follow.

LWVVA (by Olga Hernandez, President, LWVVA, LWV-VA@cox.net):

- A very successful **Fall Workshop** was held at the McCoart Building in Prince William County (our newest MAL Unit) on September 15th. More than 60 people heard Del. Vivian Watts (39th Dist.) and Micah Womack give their perspectives on "The Restoration of Felons' Civil Rights in Virginia" (the LWVVA study 07-09) and attended workshops on Citizen Advocacy, Membership database management, Program Planning and Voters Service.
- The Women's Roundtable (**WRT**) **Pre-Session Meeting & Luncheon** will be held on December 5, 2007, at the State Capitol in Richmond. In addition to hearing legislators speak about the upcoming 2008 Session of the General Assembly which convenes January 9, tours will be given of the newly renovated Capitol building. Reservations for the luncheon (cost \$30) must be made by November 21. No reservations are required for attending the meeting at 9:30 a.m. For more information, go to the LWV VA website: www.lwv-va.org. The WRT will begin meeting in Richmond on January 16, 2008.

Spotlight, cont'd from Page 5, Col 2

"Crossing the pond" in 1984, she has lived in Vienna with her husband John and their two sons since then. They have a yellow Labrador who keeps them active and a cat who mostly eats and sleeps. Always expecting to go back home, the Hart family realized that they wanted to stay in the US and became US citizens in 2002. They joined the LWV after attending an LWVFA course "More Power to You," at the Fairfax County Government Center. Lorraine obtained an Associate in Science Degree from NVCC and hopes to complete her full degree from George Mason University. She has worked for adult educational and government institutions in Virginia and her hobbies are reading, history, music and singing.

Lorraine has been Voter Service Director - Outreach for the LWVFA since 2005 and organizes our outreach at community events by providing trained assistant voter registrars to help people register to vote and by recruiting volunteers to distribute League literature and recruit new members. Also, she is responsible for organizing our Election Information Service through our Phone Bank set up to answer questions from the public during the ten day run up to the November elections.

"This has certainly been a learning experience for me and my husband and we are most grateful for all the new friends and acquaintances we have made," stated Lorraine.

Next Month's Spotlight: Sally Ormsby

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations – Topic: LWVUS & LWVFA Program Planning

Members and visitors may attend any meeting convenient for them. As of November 1, 2007 locations were correct; *please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend.* Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations

Monday, December 10

1:30 pm Greenspring (GSP)
Hunters Crossing Classroom
Spring Village Drive,
Springfield 22150
Contact: Jane 703-569-0079

Tuesday, December 11

12:30 pm McLean (MCL)
McLean Community Center Rm #2
1234 Ingleside Avenue
McLean 22101
Contact: Judy, 703-524-0991
(Note: day changed to Tuesday)

7:45 pm Vienna Evening (VE)
1835 St. Boniface
Vienna, 22180
Contact: Gail Doughty 703-281-1143

Wednesday, December 12

9:30 am Fairfax Station (FXS)
7902 Bracksford Court
Fairfax Station 22039
Contact: Lois 703-690-0908

9:30 am Mt Vernon Day (MVD)
(formerly Hollin Hills Day)
Mt. Vernon District Gov. Center
2511 Parkers Lane,
Alexandria 22306
Contact: Gail, 703-360-6561

12:00 Noon Chantilly/Herndon (CHD)
Sully District Governmental Center
4900 Stonecroft Boulevard.
Centreville 20151
Contact: Susan 703-780-3902

6:15 pm Dinner Unit (DU)
Yen Cheng Restaurant
Main Street Center
9992 Main Street
Fairfax 22031
Contact: Tin 703-207-4669

7:30 pm Reston Evening (RE)
Reston Museum
1639 Washington Plaza,
Lake Anne Village Center
Reston 20190
Contact: Wendy 703-319-4114

Thursday, December 13

9:00 am Reston Day (RD)
11624 Sourwood Lane
Reston 20192
Contact: Margo 703-620-9054

9:15 am Fairfax City Day (FXD)
10022 Lochness Court
Vienna 22181
Call Jeanne 703-591-4580

9:30 am Springfield (SPF)
Packard Center (Lg. Conf. Rm)
4026 Hummer Road
Annandale 22003
Contact: Nancy 703-256-6570 or
Peg 703-256-9420

7:45 pm Mt Vernon Eve. (MVE)
(formerly Hollin Hills Evening)
Mt Vernon District Gov't Center
2511 Parkers Lane
Alexandria 22306
Contact: Susan 703-780-3902,

January's Topic: Environmental Quality: “Cool Counties Initiative”



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December, 2007

Mary Grace Lintz, Acting President
Ron Page, 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 citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a member.

LWVFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Dues year ends thru June 30th.)

Membership Category: Individual \$55 ____; Household (2 persons—1 Bulletin) \$75 ____; Advocate Member \$100 ____;
Student \$27.50 ____ (Coll. Attending _____)

Membership is: New ____; Renewal ____; Reinstate ____; Subsidy Requested ____

We value membership. A subsidy fund is available, check block above and include whatever you can afford.

Dues are **not** tax deductible. Tax-deductible donations must be written on a separate check payable to **LWVFA Ed. Fund.**

Please Print Clearly!

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Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip + 4** _____

Phone (H) _____ **(W)** _____ **E-Mail** _____

Please mail your check and completed application to: LWVFA 4026 Hummer Rd. Suite 214, Annandale, VA 22003-2403

Thank you for checking off your interests:

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<input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Write in Below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Libraries	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Judicial Systems	
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Problems	