



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

# Fairfax VOTER

December 2009

Volume 62, Issue 4

## Program Planning for LWVUS & LWVFA 2010-2012

### Your Chance to Choose League Program

It is that time of year again -- program planning! Think about the 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 a new study?

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

### Calendar

#### November

- 17-20 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Equal Suffrage League  
**18 Board Meeting 10 a.m.**  
**New Members Reception 1 p.m.**  
26 Thanksgiving- Schools Closed 26 & 27

#### December

- 01 January *Fairfax VOTER* deadline  
**08-10, 14 Units:** Program Planning  
12 First Day of Chanukah (starts eve of 11<sup>th</sup>)  
**16 Board Mtg/Jan. UC letter deadline**  
23-Jan 4 *School Vacation/LWVFA office closed*  
25 Christmas  
26 Kwanzaa begins

#### **2010**

#### January (no Unit Meetings)

- 01 New Year's Day  
02 February *Fairfax VOTER* deadline  
04 Schools/LWVFA office reopens  
06 Prog. Planning recommendations  
due to LWVUS  
09 No. VA. G.A. delegates public hearing  
13 2010 Gen. Assembly convenes

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## The President's Message

Forum, debates, panels – these are events the public expects the League to sponsor. And we did. In October we sponsored the Mideast panel titled “Peace in the Middle East: Does the U.S. Have an Effective Role to Play?” and co-sponsored a forum for the 53<sup>rd</sup> District state delegate candidates.

First, let's start with the panel. It was excellent! The caliber of the panelists was superlative: Career Ambassador Thomas Pickering, moderator; Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, professor at American University's School of International Service; Ambassador Warren Clark now Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace; Norman Howard, retired from government service as an intelligence research analyst; and Dr. Christopher Mitchell, professor emeritus of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. And the discussion was of the same caliber as the panelists. I admit since this is a subject where emotions and tempers can explode, I was a bit apprehensive about the audience's behavior. I shouldn't have been. The audience was attentive, asked thoughtful questions and sat for an hour and a half without noticing how much time had passed. It was an event I was very proud of LWVFA for sponsoring. Kudos to **Lois Page**, Chair and **Kathleen Pablo, Karol McKalip, Alice Pickering and Inta Sradars**, committee members, for all the hard work and the courage to produce a panel on such a delicate subject.

Now on to the forum. It was a complete surprise. It was put forth as a forum and was advertised as a forum. It turned into a very heated and at times unruly debate. And the audience provided the unruliness. The League of Women Voters, I believe, has to look anew at our debates and forums and ask if there could be a better way of presenting the candidates without the jeering, laughing and the complete disregard of the rules by taking pictures, recording, and impolite behavior that occurred that evening. We have no way of enforcing our rules and again, I believe, leave ourselves open to be used and manipulated by the political parties and candidates. I know our mission is to provide activities whereby the public can learn about the candidates and issues. But, that that can only occur with the audiences having the same goals. I have been involved in only three debates, and the only one that was a true debate was the one that was televised with a panel of media representatives and no audience. Fairfax Public Access, Channel 10, televised and broadcast the debate over the regular channels as well as over the Internet live. And

it was a true debate with the three candidates answering each question within the allotted time without the “loaded” questions put forth by those attending a public debate. The televised debate reached more people than one with only a “live” audience and was a civilized exchange of policies and beliefs. Is this the future of debates and forums? Has the partisanship become so extreme that we cannot have a civil public discussion any more? It's something to think about.

*Janey*

## Governor Appoints Hawn and Hernandez

At press time we learned that Governor Tim Kaine has appointed Olga Hernandez, LWV-VA President, and Carol Hawn, LWVFA Voters Service Publications, to the state 2010 Census Complete Count Committee. Carol Hawn is the Chair.

## Think Green . . .

More than 400 paper mills in the United States use at least some recovered materials in their manufacturing processes, and more than 200 of those mills use recovered fiber exclusively. (EPA, 2008)

## LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2009 - 2010

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

# Virginia's Election Laws: Members See Need for Change

Karol McKalip, Program Assistant

October's program took a look at the progress being made by our state Election Laws Committee. Members were asked to list the issues that were most important to them. The result was a host of suggestions for the committee to pursue.

## Registration

Unit discussions on voter registration centered on its purpose and process. While the initial thought in one unit was that its purpose is to reduce or eliminate fraud, the consensus was that it is an administrative tool to ease voting on Election Day. Currently, registration is deemed easier than in the past; however, most units felt there was still room for improvement. Some suggestions for change included:

- Shorten the time between the last date for registration and the date of voting
- Stress the need that applications must be complete and all blanks must be filled
- Establish an automatic voter registration
- Examine registration procedures in other jurisdictions
- Consider on-line registration
- Clarify the phrase "limited period of time" to vote in an old precinct after a voter moves to a new one
- Add "verify residence" to the listing of the primary purposes of registration
- Determine the extent to which voter registrations still miss people

Some units had questions about the availability of on-line applications; whether the DMV registration process was working; how to facilitate both registration and voting for people who move between jurisdictions.

## Absentee Voting

Making absentee voting easier and eliminating or, at least, reducing the problems, delays, and difficulties in military and overseas voting dominated the unit discussions on this topic. Several units felt that no reason need be given to vote absentee either by mail or in person. One unit saw no need for the use of a "statement under oath" and that last minute absentee voting in case of an emergency should be strengthened. Another unit wondered how uniform voting procedures are throughout the state, especially concerning absentee ballots.

Several units endorsed the idea that all ballots should be counted regardless of the election's outcome. The Vienna Unit stated, "All ballots should be counted ...Candidates should know the will of the absentees... [their] rights should

be respected. An absentee voter whose ballot is not counted is effectively disenfranchised." This was particularly addressed to those ballots from military and overseas voters; if necessary, an extension of time to receive these ballots should be considered.

It should not be necessary to have a reason to vote prior to Election Day. To make absentee voting easier, send out forms earlier and give voters an on-line option, especially for those in the military and overseas. The term "military" should be added to the absentee voting section of the outline.

## Election Day

Discussions for voting on Election Day concentrated primarily on two topics: the use of ID's and extension of voting hours. The requirement for voter identification needs clarification. The requirement is not unreasonable but provisions need to be uniformly enforced. Extending voting hours should be studied further; the term "Early Voting" could be used in this regard. There was recognition that poll workers would be adversely affected and that provisions would need to be made for the longer day. Nonetheless, weather or other emergencies and the commuting time of voters should be considered. Changing Election Day to weekends or specified holidays should be strongly considered. Many units suggested this change.

## Funding

Little discussion in this area occurred. One unit asked how costs for town and city elections are handled in Virginia. This is covered by the Virginia Code that says the cost of conducting town elections is paid by the towns.

## Miscellaneous/Questions

Some other areas of discussion:

- All political parties should be identified in media ads
- Concerns were voiced about vandalism against political signs, especially on private property
- Questions arose around campaign financing
- One unit wondered why shouldn't those who own property or pay taxes in more than one location be able to vote in each place on local issues
- Another group wondered if voting rolls are purged after a period of not voting (four years?) and are registration books cleaned up?
- Another area of voting importance includes felon voting rights
- Regarding registration, former Senator Daschle has endorsed a maintained roster; can this be studied by the LWV and endorsed?

## County Deals With a Variety of Housing Issues

County budget concerns continue to dominate the work of county and public school staff as they try to develop plans for maintaining services while cutting costs. Whether or not you attended a county community dialogue meeting on the budget, you can certainly consider your own priorities and convey them to your supervisor. They are genuinely interested in ideas for cutting costs or raising more revenue. Plus, they do want to hear what citizens want saved from the budget ax! Pull out your *Facts for Voters* and tell them.

One of the means that County Executive Tony Griffin has chosen to save money was refunding and reissuing some county general revenue bonds to take advantage of lower interest rates. The timing of the October 5 Board meeting was such that the supervisors could authorize this action on short notice. Griffin noted that it was 10 days from decision to execution to take advantage of current low rates for borrowing.

On October 5 the Board of Supervisors recognized a group of architects, a contractor and a developer for construction of a carbon-neutral designer showhouse in McLean. Later in the meeting Supervisor Herrity asked county staff to study and testify in Richmond on the most cost-effective ways to increase energy efficiency in residential housing. This related to potential changes in the state building code that would require greater energy efficiency in new residential construction projects. Herrity was concerned about how much the new rules would increase the cost of housing. Supervisor McKay agreed with the idea of addressing the most cost-efficient energy conservation measures, but noted that a higher initial cost of housing may be justified if recurring energy costs are sufficiently lower. He pointed out that in one condominium complex in his district, many residents have higher energy bills for utilities than payments for their mortgage.

At the October 19 Board meeting, Supervisor McKay asked the staff to prepare a simple, short publication in basic English to be printed and posted on the website to summarize the laws relating to other frequent residential zoning infractions beyond just occupancy rules. This would include rules relating to fence height, grass height, trash at curb blocking sidewalk, parking on the grass and the necessity of displaying house numbers. He noted that zoning rules are extensive, wording is complicated, and homeowners and civic associations have difficulty figuring out what is or is not a violation. Supervisor Gross agreed with the need for such a document, but would also like to see it in Spanish and possibly Vietnamese.

Also at the October 19 meeting, the Board passed a provision that will allow for civil penalties for violations of the Virginia residential building maintenance code. Up until now, violations could be prosecuted as criminal misdemeanors, but this was not always appropriate for minor offenses. It took time and required appearances in Circuit Court. This new provision establishes a uniform schedule of civil penalties (fines) for specified violations with higher fines for repeat offenses. Unsafe structures or structures unfit for human habitation will continue to be prosecuted as criminal offenses.

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## Why Are There No Staples in My VOTER?

Did you notice that there are no staples in this *VOTER* (as well as the November *VOTER*)? Here is the reason.

In September, the U.S. Postal Service changed the regulations for bulk mailing pieces that are stapled and folded. If the piece is folded in half and staples are present on the “spine,” then there must be three 1-inch-size tabs placed on the piece (two tabs on long side and one tab on one short side).

Our printing and mailing company, Discount Newsletter Printer, has had to retool its tabbing machine to comply with three tabs. The extra tabs cost more, but the piece can be mailed as a “letter,” which is more economical. The alternative is to mail out the *VOTER* as a “flat” like a magazine, which we did for October’s *VOTER*; but the postage for bulk mailing flats is twice as much as for mailing as a letter.

We discovered that if *no staples* were used, the piece could be folded and mailed as a letter with only one tab, as was previously done. We save on postage and on the extra tabbing costs (at least until the USPS changes the regs again). We hope this has not inconvenienced you; let us know your thoughts.

## Think Green . . .

**Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) are an energy-saving alternative to incandescent bulbs — they produce the same amount of light, use one third of the electricity, and last up to ten times as long. (Worldwatch Institute, 2007)**



# Program Planning: Your Chance to Shape Upcoming Program in 2010-2012

By Lois Page, LWFVA Program Director

December's program is a time to reflect on the truly important issues to League members. We cannot do everything, but we are certainly good at having an impact on a few issues at a time. We are choosing both local and LWFVUS program for the program year that begins next fall.

One important aspect of League program is that it includes **both study and action. Members will be asked to identify positions that should have the highest priority for action as well as a very few areas that need to be reviewed for a possible update or studied anew. Reviews or studies lead to concurrence or consensus.**

As you evaluate issues, ask yourself these questions: Is there widespread member interest? Is this a timely issue? Is government action the most effective way to address the problem? Do we have the people to work on this?

Feedback forms will be brought to your unit by the Board member leading the discussion. A copy will be sent ahead of time to your unit chair. The forms will also appear on our website—[www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org). Elsewhere in this *VOTER* (page P-6) is information about how you can provide feedback if you cannot attend a unit meeting. Members will be asked, on both LWFVUS and LWFVFA levels to 1) decide if there is one issue that they would like to be reviewed; 2) decide if there is one issue on which they would like a new study; 3) decide if there are any issues that should have priority for action; 4) decide if there are any positions that should be abandoned, 5) and very importantly, **who is willing to work on the issue.** For LWFVFA program, you will be asked if there are topics on which you would like informational programs. You may also decide that you have considered everything and do not want to recommend any changes.

## I. ABOUT LWFVUS PROGRAM PLANNING

We are being asked by LWFVUS to provide feedback before March, so that our delegates to the June convention will be attending with a purpose, not subject to pressure by one interest group. Last convention we fought a very good fight for a LWFVUS concurrence on our state redistricting study—and lost. But we tried, and did manage to provide some enlightenment on the topic.

### Resources and Volunteer Time

Before recommending a study, review or concurrence, Leagues need to consider the resource commitment required for their own League as well as for the LWFVUS League. A recommendation of a new study, review or concurrence is a request to give the recommendation a high priority for the biennium at both the LWFVFA and LWFVUS levels. If a recommendation is adopted, local Leagues and LWFVUS,

with limited resources – money, but even more important volunteer time – may find it necessary to drop other activities in order to participate. Although technology has made it possible to reduce expenses, an increase in PMP may be required to help fund the work at the LWFVUS level.

### Review, New Study, or Concurrence?

- **Review:** Leagues may recommend one LWFVUS position for review during each biennium. If adopted, a review committee will be appointed to examine the position and, if appropriate, suggest changes and updating. A statement of scope lists the areas to be explored, the emphasis on a particular aspect of the issue, and the parameters of the study.
- **New Study/Program Item:** To propose a new study, you need to fill out that section on the response form by including a brief statement (200 words or less), stating the scope of the study. List this statement under the appropriate position heading – Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, or Social Policy. Statement of scope is the same as for a review
- **Concurrence:** LWFVUS's response form includes the option to recommend a program item for concurrence. However, units are not being asked to consider a concurrence. If a suggested study might be achieved through a concurrence, which does not require a full-blown and expensive study, our local Board will explore that option.

### What Positions Are Already on the Books?

The short version is reproduced below on P-2 to P-4. The full text of our LWFVUS positions is too long to include in the *VOTER* but makes for fascinating reading, complete with background of how changes have been made over the years. Please make every effort to download *Impact*

on *Issues 2008* from the website: [www.lwv-us.org](http://www.lwv-us.org). The Board member attending your unit should have a hard copy.

## Do We Have Any Suggestions So Far?

A few suggestions for program recommendations on the LWVUS level were made during the November units and include a look at climate issues, domestic violence and, since we spent so much time on the Middle East, a review of our rather vague language concerning dealing with that troubled area. The League of Women Voters of Boulder County and the League of Women Voters of Colorado are spearheading a push for campaign finance reform

## II. ABOUT LWVFA PROGRAM PLANNING

The same principles apply for local program, except that we adopt our program for the next year at our April Annual Meeting rather than at a June convention. Another difference is that we already have feedback from you about some program interests, listed later in this material. Thirdly, we are asking you this year to indicate some topics on which you would like an informational program without a major study or consensus. We've had a suggestion that this could come in the form of Lunch and Learn, information meetings over brown bag lunches on topics of interest.

### Suggestions So Far for Local Programming

1. Our Justice Committee is being revived, with a focus on domestic violence. Much has happened since the last update of our Domestic Violence study, and Fairfax County is doing so many things. League members have monitored court hearings, and Barbara Nunes has attended the Domestic Violence Prevention Policy Coordinating Council meetings for the past four years. There are many players in this drama and the newest issue is teen dating and relationship violence problems. We might have a series of three programs on aspects of the issue.

2. Pros and cons of Fairfax County becoming a city and/or taking over some of the services now provided by the state. This proposal comes from Action Chair Jane Hilder, who attends BOS meetings. It was mentioned by the County Executive at a BOS meeting last year and is still a possibility.

From our education committee come three suggestions:

3. Do students in Fairfax County have too much homework? Are there alternatives to homework?

Some supporting research: "...decades of investigation have failed to turn up any evidence that

*homework is beneficial for students in elementary school. Even if you regard standardized test results as a useful measure, homework (some versus none, or more versus less) isn't even correlated with higher scores at these ages. The only effect that does show up is more negative attitudes on the part of students who get more assignments. .... In high school, some studies do find a correlation between homework and test scores (or grades), but it's usually fairly small and it has a tendency to disappear when more sophisticated statistical controls are applied. Moreover, there's no evidence that higher achievement is due to the homework even when an association does appear.* " <http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/edweek/homework.htm>

4. Examine ways to make community participation in decision making by the Fairfax County School Board and the Board of Supervisors more effective. Would lengthening the amount of time between the introduction of new business and the vote on an action item allow modification of proposed actions in response to comments? Examine the rules and regulations regarding the relations between community members, elected officials and government staff .

5. Physical education, recess, and extracurricular athletics. Examine K-12 programs and alternatives.

### What Positions Are Held By LWVFA?

Like LWVUS, we have a long version of our positions—*Here We Stand 2008*—and a shorter Positions in Brief June 2009, which we reproduce for you on P-4 to P-5. The long version, also interesting reading, may be found on our local website—[www.lwv.fairfax.org](http://www.lwv.fairfax.org).

## III. LWVUS PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS 2008-2010

### A. REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT: Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

#### 1. Voting Rights

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

**2. 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 LWVUS voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

**3. 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.

**4. 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.

**B. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.**

**1. 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**3. 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.

## **D. SOCIAL POLICY: Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.**

### **1. 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.

### **2. 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.

**3. 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.

**4. Immigration** - Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

**5. 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.

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

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

**8. Violence Prevention** - Support violence prevention programs in communities.

**9. 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.

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

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

*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.*

## **IV. LWVFA PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS 2008-2010**

### **A. GOVERNMENT**

**1. Fairfax County & City of Fairfax (1987-1996)** - 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.

**2. Fiscal (1970s-2008)** - Support for an effectively administered, equitable tax system and the sale of bonds for capital improvements including the construction and renewal of school facilities. 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.

**3. Public Libraries (1984-2006)** - 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.

**4. Registration and Voting** - Support efforts to increase



voter registration and voter participation in Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax.

**5. Transportation (1981-2004)** - Support for 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

## **B. NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **1. Environmental Quality (EQ)**

- **Solid Waste (1980-1990)** - 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 (1985-1994)** - 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 (1988-1994)** - 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 (1992)** - 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.
- **Climate Change (2009)** - Localities must play a significant role in addressing the causes of climate change. The League supports and encourages the County and City of Fairfax to adopt and carry out programs that will minimize the causes and effects of climate change. The League also supports the coordination of these efforts with those of other localities.

### **2. Land Use Planning (1984-2000)**

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.

**3. Water** - Support for Fairfax County taking measures

necessary to effectively protect the Occoquan Reservoir from pollution.

## **C. SOCIAL POLICY**

**1. Health Care (1984-1988)** - Support publicly funded health planning to control costs and support Fairfax County/City having 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 outreach program to inform the public about available health care programs

**2. Human Services (1976-1990)** - 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; and support permanent shelters for homeless families and individuals.

**3. Judicial System (2000)** - Support court, correctional and law enforcement systems for Fairfax County/City that are conducted in a just and dignified manner; that minister to all people without legal, economic or administrative discrimination; that require efficient administration and competent personnel who are given a clear assignment of responsibility and adequate financing; that require proper planning and coordination between related agencies; and that encourage the active and informed participation of citizens.

**4. Juvenile Problems (1994)** - Support measures for problem youth whereby the major goal of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for Fairfax County/City is the protection and rehabilitation of problem youth. Support for alternatives to detention and a variety of individual and group homes located throughout the county/city, in preference to institutions. These facilities should provide for separation of various types of juveniles according to their individual needs.

**5. Schools (2007-2008)** - Promote equal opportunity for a quality education in Fairfax County/City schools. Support for proper planning; competent administration; programs to meet special needs; adequate personnel, facilities and financing; well defined channels for community input and review; and appropriate books and materials to support and enhance the instructional program.

## Cannot attend a unit meeting but want to be heard on program?

Go to the website—[www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org)—download the form and send it to the League office (address in *VOTER*) by the time of the unit meetings for December, or e-mail to [loismpage@cox.net](mailto:loismpage@cox.net). Or use the guide below to devise your own form and mail it to the League Office:

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

### I. LWVUS program suggestions: (include headings from LWVUS Positions in Brief)

- Review: Include headings and scope in 25 words or less
- New Study: Include major heading (1 of 4) and scope in 25 words or less
- Priorities for action: Identify major headings and specific positions

### II. Local program suggestions: (include headings from LWVFA Positions in Brief)

- Review: Include headings and scope in 25 words or less
- New Study: Include major heading (1 of 3) and scope in 25 words or less
- Priorities for action: Identify major headings and specific positions
- Suggestions for informational meetings

## Sally Ormsby's Memory Honored in Fall 2009



Beloved LWVFA member and community activist Sally B. Ormsby passed away October 2008. Her memory was honored on November 14, 2009, with the dedication of a Fairfax County Park and Trail named for her. The Sally Ormsby Park runs along the Cross County Trail in the Accotink Stream Valley between Barkley Drive and Prosperity Avenue.

The dedication ceremony was held at the first bridge along the path, a short walk from the road. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Park Authority invited many of Sally's friends and colleagues, including members of LWVFA, to the dedication.

LWVFA also honored Sally's memory by using contributions made to LWVFA in Sally's name for printing the 2009 Fall Voters Guides in 16 editions of the *Connection Newspapers* during the week of October 26, 2009.

The Voters Guide included in the *Fairfax Connection* covered the subdivision where Sally lived for many years – Mantua—and showed this acknowledgment: "Funding for the Fall 2009 Voters Guide provided through the LWVFA Education Fund and contributions in memory of Sally B. Ormsby."

Sadly, we learned that Sally's husband, Clayt, also passed away on October 27, 2009, following complications from surgery. The Fairfax Area League and entire Fairfax community mourn the loss of Sally and Clayt.

## A Time for Change: Our 2010 Census Partnership

By O.G. Harper, Census Liaison

Because League members understand the importance of the census and the necessity of having hard-to-count persons fill out the census questionnaires, those of you wishing to participate in the 2010 Census Partnership with the League of Women Voters can do so in the following ways:

Join our census committee. We need to keep an eye on the LWVFA calendar as well as the 2010 Census website to keep us up-to-date on League and census events. We will develop fliers that will spread the word about the census

as well as the League. We also must plan League outreach activities and innovative ways to reach the maximum number of persons with promotional information and other educational census materials as well as information about the League that might help boost our membership. Many of you have talents, ideas, and interests, and perhaps other languages (even if only a few words) that you can share. All are welcome! Please e-mail me at [ogharper@verizon.net](mailto:ogharper@verizon.net).



Mark Your Calendar Now . . .

## General Meeting to Focus on Plans for Tyson's Corner

It's that time of year again. The LWVFA General Meeting will be on Saturday, January 23, 2010, at the Country Club of Fairfax. Our speaker will be Clark Tyler, Chairman of the Tyson's Land Use Task Force, speaking on "A New Tyson's – Vision or Pipe Dream?" Mr. Tyler is a semi-retired businessman and former government official. He currently is a consultant to the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development relative to the impact on the state of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission.



~ You are cordially invited to attend ~



The LWV of the Fairfax Area

### General Meeting

on

**Saturday, January 23, 2010**

at

COUNTRY CLUB OF FAIRFAX  
5110 Ox Road (Route 123 & Braddock Roads)  
Fairfax, VA 22030

10 AM – Registration & Coffee

10:30 AM

### “A New Tysons - Vision or Pipe Dream?”

Clark Tyler, Chairman of Tysons' Land Use Task Force

12:00 noon –Luncheon

(Reservations required for luncheon only)

**Luncheon Reservation Deadline January 15, 2009-- Cost: \$35 per person**

*Menu: House Salad With Raspberry Vinaigrette, Chicken Capri [Chicken Breast With Basil Butter and Angel Hair Pasta], Chef's Vegetables, Rolls and Butter, Special Dessert, Coffee Service*

\*\*\*\*\*

Program is free; Luncheon, \$35 per person.

Make checks payable to: **LWVFA** and Mail with reservation form to:

**2010 General Meeting, 10172 Turnberry Place, Oakton, VA 22124**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch @\$35 ea. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number & E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch @\$35ea. \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

For special dietary needs or questions, call Mary at 703-319-2185



## Middle East Peace Process: Panelists Feel U.S. Does Have an Essential Part to Play

By Lois Page, Program Director

“What we have here is the tension between searching for justice and searching for peace.” With these words panelist Dr. Christopher Mitchell summed up the intractable nature of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, and for that matter, most of the long entrenched conflicts in the world.

For two hours a distinguished panel of experts on the Middle East and on conflict resolution presented their views and fielded questions from the audience of nearly 100 at LWVFA’s program at Pohick Regional Library. The question of the day, “Peace in the Middle East: Does the U.S. Have an Effective Role to Play?”

Panel moderator Career Ambassador Thomas Pickering also had a summary reflection: “Violence is a terrible curse. It leads both sides to support of the radical elements.” He said that each side is totally convinced the other side started it. In other words, they are seeking justice, not peace.



Thomas Pickering

Dr. Mohammad Abu-Nimer discussed the most important impediments to peace for the Palestinians. In their daily lives, they include continuing settlement encroachment and demolition of housing where Palestinians are living; Jewish checkpoints—350 of them in a small area—that add hours to moving about within the country; the fence—either the “apartheid wall” or “security wall,” depending on your point of view—that is 24-foot high and stretches for 650 miles, often dividing or encircling communities; what feels like a siege of Muslim holy sites, especially Jerusalem; and the increasing economic hardship.



Mohammad Abu-Nimer

Political impediments include the fact that the Palestinian government is divided and 45 percent support Hamas; any fruitful negotiations must deal with Hamas. Abu-Nimer

added that the Israeli leadership must believe in a two-state solution and stop colonizing the West Bank. Refugees numbering 4.2 million must be dealt with, and the U.S. government must back off from its blind support for Israeli development.

Panelist Ambassador Warren Clark took up the issue of what Israelis see as the primary impediments to peace. The Israeli prime minister has said many times that he will talk with the Palestinians, and over the years a number of serious proposals for peace have been rejected. Now, the Israelis question whether the negotiators have any real interest in peace (Hamas has pledged to eliminate Israel), whether there is adequate support for Palestinian leadership (given the divided support for Fatah and Hamas), and whether this leadership has the enforcement power to bring about peace (groups of Palestinians continue to terrorize Israeli citizens). Israelis contend that a lasting peace must be regional, yet they don’t trust the surrounding Arab states. Internal political contention also affects Israeli efforts: many elements have an interest in maintaining the status quo or even expanding. The settlers that have now moved into East Jerusalem and the West Bank would be very expensive to move.

Norman Howard dealt with the main issues to be discussed in final negotiations. Both sides are divided among various constituencies and positions change. Fundamental issues involve borders and physical security, Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, and water resources. This primal conflict over land—who should own and control it—is intertwined with other concerns involving national ideologies, religious claims and counterclaims, existential fears of terrorism on the part of Israelis, and a psychology of loss on the part of Palestinians.



Norman Howard

Previous peace efforts suggest Palestinians would accept adjustments of the 1967 pre-war borders and transfer of some larger settlements to Israel. Other settlements would have to be withdrawn to provide contiguity to the new state. They would require a land swap from Israel as compensation for any West Bank territory relinquished, as well as a corridor linking the Gaza Strip with the West Bank. East Jerusalem must be the Palestinian capital, encompassing sovereignty



over its Arab neighborhoods and the Muslim holy places in the old city.

Palestinians insist on the refugees' right of return, whether to Israel itself (perhaps only symbolically) or to the new Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Borders, including air and sea space, would come under Palestinian control, while Palestinians would be responsible for their own internal security. And, clearly, water issues will be on any final agenda. Water is scarce, the West Bank aquifers are being depleted, in Gaza water is barely potable, and Palestinians deeply resent Israeli control of their perceived water assets.

Hamas, which took full control of Gaza from Fatah in 2007, refuses to renounce violence or recognize Israel, and remains outside the negotiating process. On occasion its spokesmen have suggested it might agree to the formation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel if approved by referendum. Others insist their goal is a state in all of historic Palestine; the 1988 charter speaks of Israel's elimination.

Beginning with the Oslo process, Israelis have negotiated the parameters of a two-state solution. At Camp David in 2000, Prime Minister Barak offered a pullback of settlements on the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian sovereignty over Arab sectors of East Jerusalem and custody over the Muslim holy sites, return of Palestinian refugees to the new state but not to Israel, and continued Israeli military control of the Jordan Valley. This unwritten offer was elaborated further in talks at Taba, evidently increasing the amount of Palestinian land to be returned. But the Palestinian *intifada* blocked any serious effort to move forward.

Benjamin Netanyahu, who became Israeli prime minister last spring, has reluctantly accepted the idea of a two-state solution, but his real emphasis is on "economic peace" and easing conditions in the West Bank. In contrast to his predecessor, Netanyahu has declared that Jerusalem will never be re-divided, and Palestinians cannot have a capital or any quasi- sovereignty there. The Palestinian state would be strictly demilitarized, large settlements and land west of the separation wall retained by Israel, refugees allowed to return to Palestinian territory only, and border controls maintained by Israel.

Palestinians would also be required to deal more strenuously with terrorist infrastructures prior to independence, and explicitly recognize Israel's legitimacy as a Jewish State. In his June 14 address at Bar Ilan University, for example, Netanyahu declared that 'the simple truth is that the root of the conflict, was, and remains, the [Arab] refusal to

recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state of their own, as their historic homeland.'



Christopher Mitchell

He added that any effort must take public opinion into account. The "street" must be dealt with honestly; peace will be difficult to live with and there will be people trying to sabotage it. Dr. Mitchell also feels that the U.S. should not try to do everything ourselves. We need to identify who can bring both parts of a side together. We also need to consider roles to be played after an agreement: who will monitor, adjust, and ensure fulfillment of promises?

During the question and answer period, Mr. Clark stated if we don't solve this problem "we are looking at another terrible disaster." Mr. Pickering added that the bicycle principle is in force here: "if we aren't moving forward, we're falling down." Mr. Howard outlined the special nature of the isolation of Gaza where Hamas is in charge. Until recently, our government has stood back and watched the war, seeming to condone violence. We have, however, begun urging Israel to open up checkpoints; only 100 trucks are allowed to pass through each day. As a result 1,000 tunnels have been built into Egypt, including an oil pipeline. Hamas controls the tunnels and taxes the merchants—helping to keep itself in power.



Warren Clark

The right of return was also discussed. Palestinians claim the right to return to the land from which they were ousted in 1948. The Israelis might take in a symbolic number but will never give up all the land that is claimed as it would put them in the minority. Israelis, of course, feel they have an even older claim to the land.

(Panel, cont.on P. 8, Col. 1)

(Panel, from P. 7, Col. 2)

With the proviso that the rest of the world needs to be made familiar with the constraints on U.S. policy, a number of suggestions regarding U.S. dealings with the issue concluded the audience discussion:

- 1) U.S. policy needs more balance; we need to follow up on past agreements and insist on enforcement.
- 2) We must discontinue our no-accountability open checkbook policy with Israel.
- 3) We need to consider a peacekeeping arrangement that will enforce a cease-fire.
- 4) The president should make a major speech laying out our vision.
- 5) A time table needs to be set up.
- 6) A regional, multistate security arrangement must be put in place.
- 7) The U.S. has to be able to criticize Israel, especially regarding settlements.
- 8) We must urge Israel to set aside resources for a resettlement program.

- 9) We must get serious about nuclear disarmament. Security for both entities must be insured.
- 10) We should consider working through Egypt and Saudi Arabia to bring the two sides together.
- 11) We need a framework for our views that keeps out diversions.

Ambassador Pickering closed the meeting saying that the U.S. has long been at the center of the peace process. Parties from Bunche to Obama have seen the U.S. as an essential mediator in the "long dolorous history" of conflict.

(Comments about this article will be welcomed as Letters to the Editor.)

## Think Green . . .

\* If you need to warm up or defrost small amounts of food, use a microwave instead of the stove to save energy. Microwave ovens use around 50 percent less energy than conventional ovens do. (California Energy Commission, 2006)



Marilyn Hedges manages the League's information booth at the Clifton Days celebration last month. Many folks dropped by to learn more about the League and Turning Point Plaza Suffrage Memorial.

## In Memorium

### Ruth Zeul

Long-time Leaguer Ruth Zeul, a member of the Vienna Evening Unit, died October 20 at age 92. She was born in St. Louis and earned a B.A. degree and M.A. in social work from Washington University there. For many years she was a social worker with private agencies and for the District of Columbia Child Welfare Office. Ruth held most unit offices and was a frequent volunteer as discussion leader throughout her tenure in the League. She often answered the League phone at election time. Ruth was especially interested in LWVFA study committees. In 2001 she proposed and chaired our study of Muslim Women in Fairfax County. She and her husband, Bob, loved to travel; they had visited all 50 states and more than 90 countries. Despite her recent failing health, her intelligence, wisdom and sense of humor never faltered.

### Mary Stack-Dunne

We also mourn the passing of Mary Stack-Dunne on October 21. Mary was an active member in the Reston Evening Unit and co-chair of the unit for several years. She also attended other League functions such as the Reston fundraisers, panel discussions and the rededication of the Lorton Workhouse historical marker. Mary had been helping Jane Hilder with observing the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meetings each month; she followed the afternoon sessions by television. She was even more active in the Reston Branch of the AAUW and lobbied for the organization on the Hill. She had a Master's in public health and epidemiology and had been a staff nurse at Arlington Hospital. Her intelligent and thought-provoking contributions during discussions will be missed by her Reston Evening Unit colleagues.

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## **This Month's Unit Meeting Locations – Topic: Program Planning**

Members and visitors are encouraged to attend any meeting convenient for them, including the “At Large Meeting” and briefing on Saturdays when a briefing is listed. As of November 7, 2009 the locations were correct, please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend. Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations.

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### **Saturday, December 5**

**NO BRIEFING**

### **Monday, December 7**

#### **1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)**

Hunters Crossing Classroom  
Spring Village Drive  
Springfield 22150  
Contact: Kay, 703-644-2670

### **Tuesday, December 8**

#### **7:45 p.m. Vienna Evening (VE)**

Patrick Henry Library  
101 Maple Avenue  
Vienna, 22180  
Contact: Anne, 703-938-7304

### **Wednesday, December 9**

#### **9:30 a.m. Mt. Vernon Day (MVD)**

Mt. Vernon District Gov. Center  
2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria  
Contact: Gail, 703-360-6561

#### **10:00 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)**

Burke Centre Library  
5935 Fred's Oak Road  
Burke Centre 22015  
Contact: Lois, 703-690-0908

#### **10:30 p.m. McLean (MCL)**

Star Nut Gourmet  
1445 Laughlin Ave.  
McLean 22101  
Contact: Gail, 703-356-2851

#### **12:00 Noon Chantilly/Herndon (CHD)**

Sully District Governmental Center  
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.  
Centreville 20151  
Contact: Susan, 703-780-3902

#### **6:15 p.m. Dinner Unit (DU)**

Yen Cheng Restaurant  
Main Street Center  
9992 Main Street, Fairfax 22030  
Contact: Tin, 703-207-4669

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

Reston Art Gallery at Heron House  
Lake Anne Village Center,  
Reston 20190  
Contact: Lucy, 703-757-5893

### **Thursday, December 10**

#### **9:15 a.m. Fairfax City Day (FXD)**

10022 Lochness Court  
Vienna 22181  
Contact: Bobby, 703-938-1486

#### **9:30 a.m. Reston Day (RD)**

11624 Sourwood Lane  
Reston 20191  
Contact: Margo, 703-620-9054

#### **9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)**

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

#### **7:45 p.m. Mt. Vernon Eve (MVE)**

Paul Spring Retirement  
Community - Mt Vernon Room  
7116 Fort Hunt Road  
Alexandria 22307  
Contact: Marge, 703-768-5212

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## **January Meeting**

### **General Meeting: Tyson's Corner Update**

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The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA)  
4026 Hummer Road, Suite #214 Annandale, VA 22003-2403  
703-658-9150. Web address: [www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org)

Non-Profit Org.  
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Permit No. 70

## Time Sensitive Materials

**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER ©  
December, 2009**

**Jane E. George, President  
Ron Page, Editor  
Liz Brooke, Coordinator**

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

## LWVFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Dues year ends June 30, 2010.)

**Membership Category:** Individual \$65 \_\_\_\_; Household (2 persons–1 *VOTER*) \$90 \_\_\_\_; Donation \$ \_\_\_\_  
Student \$32.50 \_\_\_\_; (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!**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Unit** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip + 4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (H)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(W)** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for checking off your interests:**

<input type="checkbox"/> County Govt	<input type="checkbox"/> Voting Procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Schools
<input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<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	

Mail to: LWVFA, 4026 Hummer Road, Suite 214, Annandale, VA 22003