



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

Fairfax VOTER

November 2010

Volume 63, Issue 3

So, What Does State Government Do for You?

It doesn't take a small turnout for state level elections to lead one to suspect that many people don't realize the role of state government in their lives. We decided we needed to investigate this role, so we asked our state delegation, plus the chair of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, to point out the areas of state responsibility they felt had the most impact on their constituents. Some sent us a simple list, but others responded in more detail. We present their answers to you this month, in the order that the respondents emphasized. We look forward to comparing your thoughts and theirs.

Calendar

November

- 1-2 Voters Service Phones
- 2 **ELECTION DAY**
- 4 Public Hearing on Redistricting –
Herndon Council chambers, 7 p.m.
- 5 NCA Board meeting
- 6 Briefing: “10 Ways VA Gov’t.
Impacts Your Life”
-- Mason District Gov’t. Ctr.
- 7 Daylight Savings Time ends
- 8-18 **Unit Meetings** “10 Ways VA Gov’t.
Impacts Your Life”
- 11 Veterans Day
- 16 Sequoyah Condo Election-Rt. 1,
Alexandria
- 17 **Board Meeting at Mason Dist.
Gov’t. Ctr.**
- 17 New Member Reception, 1-3 p.m.
- 25 Thanksgiving

Inside This Issue

President’s Message	2
Keeping in Touch With Members	2
Super Saturday Huge Success	2
Photographer Wanted	2
Redistricting Hearing Scheduled	3
County to Use Electronic Pollbooks	3
General Meeting on Domestic Violence	3
Action Faction: BOS report	4
Behind Bars	4
So, What Does State Govt. Do for You?	EF-1
School Menu Changed	EF-6
“Myths” Program Suggestions	5
Committee Calls for Nominations	6
Time to Get Serious	7
Domestic Violence a Major Problem	7
Women’s Legislative Roundtable	8
Unit Meeting Locations	9



The President's Message

I have to admit I'm a little confused. Members keep requesting that we have more events consisting of our "core" activities such as registration of voters, educating the public, debates etc. This was our third year of a Super Saturday, which is always on the last Saturday in September. Since this is definitely a "core" activity, why was there such a shortage of available and willing participants? From the reports of those participating in Super Saturday, some libraries were having book sales and the traffic was busy all the time. Some left early as they had passed out everything they had. Also voter registration was up, one unit having registered 12 people as well as giving two out for later completion. And the request for absentee applications was not as great, but still it was a frequent request.

There are no plans to stop having Super Saturdays as it is one of our basic activities and gets the League out in the public. I also heard of many participants saying that they received quite a few "thank you's" during their time at the libraries. We have requested that the FCPL put us on their schedule as a permanent activity for the last Saturday of September. So, please, put this on your calendars now. **The last Saturday of September is Super Saturday.** The more people we have to participate, the less each participant will have to do. Thank you,

Janey

Let Us Know How You Feel . . .

Constant Contact - Keeping in Touch With Our Members

The Board will be trying Constant Contact for 60 days to see if this is a better way of keeping in touch with the membership. Most of the communications will be short, colorful e-mail newsletters with information that needs to be distributed to the membership. We are hoping that the shortness of the e-mails will encourage readership and not the response of "not another all member e-mail - I get too many e-mails as it is."

Super Saturday is a Tremendous Success

By Janey George

From the response of the public and the reports from the units, this Super Saturday was our best so far. The traffic was better and the response of people needing to change their voting addresses, people who have moved to our area, new citizens and first-time voters was up and happily accommodated. Between the budget cuts, the economy and book sales, the libraries were full and the traffic constant. And the appreciation of the public, especially those already registered, was more than welcome. Most members did not have any WOTBs or "Facts for Voters" left afterward, and some raided the library supply to keep up with the traffic. All in all, a well spent four hours for LWVFA.

ISO . . .

Photographer Wanted to Cover League Events

Are you handy with a camera? The LWVFA Board is looking for a photographer. We need someone to get a good picture of the group as well as record League activities. If you are willing and able, please contact Janey, janey16@verizon.net or Susan, sadill@cox.net.

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2010 - 2011

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

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area
4026 Hummer Road, Suite 214
Annandale, VA 22003-2403
703-658-9150 (Info/fax/answering machine)
www.lwv-fairfax.org lwvfa@vacoxmail

President: Jane E. George 703-631-2293
janeyg16@verizon.net
Editor: Ron Page 703-690-0908
pagegolfer@cox.net
Coordinator: Liz Brooke 703-281-3380
lizbrooke@cox.net

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

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

Redistricting Hearing: A Second Chance for the Public to Be Heard

Testing New Voting Procedure . . .

Fairfax County to Use Electronic Pollbooks

Olga Hernandez President,

League of Women Voters of Virginia

For the November election, the Fairfax County Electoral Board approved the use of electronic pollbooks (EPBs) in lieu of paper pollbooks in 108 of the 231 polling places. Twelve precincts in each of the nine Supervisor Districts were selected based on prior use of EPBs, dual polling places, and number of registered voters in precincts. We expect to use the EPBs in all precincts in 2011.

The implementation of EPBs will expedite check-in, lessening the length of time needed to check in a voter. With the implementation of EPBs, voters no longer will be subject to lines split by the alphabet. (This ends the perennial question, "Why is the 'A-K' line longer than the 'L-Z' line?") Instead, voters will wait in lines similar to bank lines. In addition, electronic pollbooks will aid the Office of Elections in the automated management of voter registration data and will eliminate the expense of printing paper pollbooks.

Mark Your Calendar Now . . .

January's General Meeting to Focus on Domestic Violence

The LWVFA General Meeting will be on Saturday, January 22, 2011, at the Country Club of Fairfax. Our speaker will be Mehagen D. McRae, Esq., head of the domestic relations practice group at MacDowell & Associates. As much as we would like to think domestic violence has, if not disappeared, lessened in our society, Ms. McRae will speak on how it has grown-- and into places we had not thought it would appear.

Look for more information and a reservation form in the December *VOTER*.

Liz Brooke, *VOTER* Coordinator

Fairfax League members have been given a second chance to speak to our Virginia legislators about the importance of establishing a bipartisan commission to create new district lines. Senator Janet D. Howell, Chairman of the Committee on Privileges & Elections, has scheduled a series of public hearings throughout the state to encourage broad public input into the redistricting process that will occur in 2011. This committee seeks public comment on the redistricting process, criteria to be considered in preparing redistricting plans, and potential district changes to legislative and congressional districts.

The hearing in Northern Virginia will be held on Thursday, November 4, at 7 p.m., at the Herndon Town Council chambers, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon.

Members, of course, should speak as individuals.

The League's Position:

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports the establishment of a Reapportionment Commission for each decennial redistricting to prepare, with the Virginia Department of Legislative Services, a plan for submission to the legislature as specified by the Virginia Constitution. The Commission should be bi-partisan and be composed of individuals who are not elected officials; they should represent the geographical distribution and demographic diversity of the state, and consist of an uneven number of members.

In addition to the Virginia constitutional requirement of equal population, contiguous and compact districts and the Voting Rights Act requirements for protecting the voting strength of minority groups, the League supports the following considerations in redistricting:

- Natural geographic boundaries;
- Jurisdictional boundaries;
- Communities of interest; and
- Competitiveness

The Virginia constitution should be amended to provide that redistricting will occur on a decennial basis only. (Consensus reached 2007)

Action Faction . . .

County BOS Meeting Focuses on School Issues

Janet Al-Hussaini, Action Director

At the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors September 14, 2010 meeting, Chairman Bulova outlined the County and Schools' Carryover Review package to amend the appropriation level in the FY 2011 revised budget plan and moved adoption as presented on July 27, 2010. Included is a \$1.3 million appropriation to the Fairfax County Public Schools for the Priority Schools Initiative. Following a discussion on outcomes, Supervisor McKay requested that the Board direct staff to provide a report to either the Board's Budget or Legislative Committees on how changes at both the State and Federal level affect County funding and to invite School staff to brief the Board on changes subsequent to budget adoption. Chairman Bulova noted that the Board holds regular joint meetings with the School Board to discuss key issues. She stated that at the next scheduled joint meeting, jobs funding and the dropout rate will be discussed. Further discussion ensued regarding School accountability and transparency, the national recognition of Graham Road Elementary School, and County computer funding. The question was called on the motion, and it carried by unanimous vote.

Additionally, the Board:

- deferred action on authorizing a public hearing on the

creation of small sanitary districts for refuse collection in the Springfield District;

- approved the wording and authorized the distribution of the plain English statement for the proposed Transportation Bond referendum. Staff will work with the Bond Council on future items to ensure that primacy is given to the actual facility being funded.

Highlights From the Fairfax County BOS meeting September 28, 2010

The Board:

- presented Environmental Excellence Awards;
- authorized a public hearing on proposed amendments to the County Human Rights Ordinance;
- approved a resolution for the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court to accept grant funding from the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force through Loudoun County;
- authorized a public hearing for the creation small sanitary districts for refuse collection in the Springfield district;
- authorized the Fire and Rescue Department to accept a DHS Urban Area Security Initiative sub-grant from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission;
- approved w/amendment recommendations regarding the Metrorail Stations for Phase 2 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

Behind Bars - An Update on the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center (ADC)

By Dottie Cousineau, Volunteer at the ADC

The ADC is operated by the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office and employs 509 sheriff's deputies and 90 civilians. Both male and female deputy sheriffs manage the inmate population. In addition, 230 volunteers provided 11,000 volunteer hours in 2009, assisting inmates, teaching classes, mentoring and assisting inmates' families.

Most of the inmates are incarcerated for one year or less; however, because of the budget crunch at the state level, more and more inmates are being held in local jail facilities for longer periods of time. The average cost per inmate is \$145 per day—over \$50,000 a year—which includes basic care, housing, food and supervision. Because there is no access to alcohol or drugs in the ADC, it offers an opportunity

for inmates to “get clean” and to change their behavioral patterns. The percent of the inmate population with substance abuse issues ranges from 50 percent to 90 percent on any given day.

The Fairfax County ADC is unique in the nation, as it provides four forms of jail housing: single cell, linear, podular and direct. The jail population has decreased from 1,300 to 1,000, as the crime rate has gone down. Most (84 percent) inmates are male and live in Fairfax County (52 percent).

Educational opportunities at the jail are numerous and encouraged, as they reduce recidivism and contribute to the inmates' self-esteem and sense of accomplishment; however, classes are voluntary, not mandatory.

The ADC, in cooperation with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, has created a one-stop Employment Center to provide basic comprehensive training and employment services. The Employment Center helps inmates connect with employers who will meet, interview and hire job seekers prior to their release.

So, What Does State Government Do for You?

By Karole McKalip and Lois Page

A key purpose of the League is to discuss issues and topics with the goal of increasing citizen participation in government and encouraging discussion of public policy issues. In part we accomplish this by engaging in conversations with both our citizens and our government representatives. This month's study looks at the ways our state government most impacts Virginians.

In early August, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chair Sharon Bulova and the General Assembly representatives of the Fairfax Area were asked: "What do you believe are the top three to five (or more) ways state government affects residents?" Twenty-seven individuals were contacted and 15 sent in replies. Some merely listed their choices, while others gave reasons for their choices.

(The following local and state officials responded to our question: Sharon Bulova, Patricia Ticer, Richard Saslaw, Linda Puller, David Marsden, Vivian Watts, Eileen Filler-Corn, David Albo, Mark Sickles, Scott Surovell, Adam Ebbin, James Scott, James LeMunyon, Kaye Kory and Thomas Rust. We thank them.)

Eight issues were cited in some way by almost all of the respondents. What follows is a discussion of those areas mentioned--in the order they were considered important--and why these were considered most relevant.

The Dillon Rule

The Dillon Rule: No discussion of the impact of the state legislature on its citizens can fail to mention it. To simplify a somewhat complicated subject, the rule (named after the judge in an 1868 decision), asserts that "there are no such things as inherent rights of local self-government...Local communities must derive their powers from the state rather than the local electorate."¹ The Dillon Rule was studied in some detail by a local league committee in 2004. The study goes on to point out that "Dillon's Rule has been part of the law of Virginia since 1896 and is a fundamental rule for construing the scope of governmental powers. Attempts to repeal or modify its rigors by a constitutional amendment, as was attempted in 1971, or by legislative enactment are routinely allowed to slumber in the committees of the General Assembly."²

In short, the state has all the power over local government, unless it chooses to give it up. Virginia does observe the prohibition of *special* legislation, applying to single localities, but can get around this by drafting general language that has a locality-specific application such as a geographic location. Another variation sometimes observed is an optional charter that lists the powers and duties of a specific government body. The form tends to allow more experimentation. Cities in Virginia have charters, which

is why our local League is in the process of studying the advantages of a county becoming a city.

It should be mentioned that the preeminence of state authority over local governance generally prevails in all states, as has been upheld by a number of court cases. However, some states grant more home rule than others—with Virginia at the far end of the spectrum in reserving rights to the state level.³

Del. Kaye Kory discussed the impact of the Dillon Rule in this way: "This increased local focus on decisions made at the state level could ultimately produce a positive benefit because more scrutiny of the state government's actions could bring much-needed active involvement by our voters. The detailed regulations imposed by Richmond shape our education, transportation and land use systems; and this dictatorial governance constrains the ability of localities to shape the systems that best meet their residents' needs. My point is that the Dillon Rule style of state government has greater impact upon all Virginians than any one area of funding or any one area of service."

#1 TRANSPORTATION

Transportation ranked either No. 1 or in the top three of nearly every respondent. The state's role in transportation is key because, as **Sen. Dave Marsden** pointed out, "Virginians are primarily affected by state government through aid that is provided to localities to operate many state-mandated programs in public safety, health and education. As one of three states to have a state-operated highway system, the

impact of the state is probably the most direct and impactful in transportation.”

Fairfax County Board Chair **Sharon Bulova** agreed: “Transportation... is a primary state responsibility. Most



people don’t realize that in Fairfax County, the state is responsible for mowing medians, fixing sidewalks and repaving streets--in addition to providing funding for secondary roads and primary roads. Most people also don’t know that despite all of the major construction that

is underway, the state cupboard is bare for any other transportation projects (including maintenance).”

Del. Eileen Filler Corn expanded on the subject: “No other single issue of concern to our citizenry is raised with greater frequency than the problems of road congestion, traffic, commuting challenges and inadequate roadway maintenance. Particularly in Northern Virginia, we have been consistently shortchanged in the funding available to upgrade our local streets and Interstate highways, as well as providing convenient alternative surface transportation options such as high-speed rail service to help control the ever-increasing volume of vehicular traffic. Increasingly, the state legislature must be encouraged to provide greater budgetary support to upgrade our antiquated roads and mass transit systems, in order to ensure an improved quality of life for commuters as well as all of those who must rely on our local roadways and bridges on a daily basis.”

Sen. Patricia Ticer emphasized the economic impact of transportation issues: “This is so very important to Northern Virginia, and all we have to do here is try to commute and we learn quickly that transportation either underpins our economic vitality or undermines it. In our efforts to develop the economy, help firms to expand, and bring in out-of-state companies, we must have an infrastructure to sustain these efforts. Just as important, we need roads that will take us from our homes to those jobs we are creating, to school, the store, church, etc. Funding transportation is a contentious issue and until this is resolved, the conflict will continue.”

Del. Vivian Watts, who indicated that her rankings did not necessarily represent the importance of the service to the general public but reflected “the critical role of state

policy in how an individual is treated,” put transportation third. **Del. Dave Albo** approached the question put to him by offering a long list of state responsibilities: “Just look at state responsibilities and you can see how Richmond affects people’s lives. His No. 1 responsibility--“We build roads, rail, bridges and tunnels. We also repair them.”

In addition Senators **Richard Saslaw** and “**Toddy**” **Puller** ranked transportation as No. 1 as, did Delegates **Thomas Rust** and **Scott Surovell**. Delegates **Adam Ebbin** and **Mark Sickles** also placed it high on their lists.

#2 EDUCATION



Education, including both K-12 and higher education, was cited by all 14 legislators. In most cases it was in the top three of

importance in how state government affects most Virginia citizens. “Although public schools are operated by and receive their major funding from local jurisdiction, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education exert considerable control over public education in Virginia through the administration of state funds and the setting of overall policies.”⁴

The Board determines standards of quality (SOQ) for local schools, sets the number of credits and required courses for high school graduation, and handles certification of teachers.⁵

Sen. Marsden noted that public education is the most important of the state’s responsibilities. Marsden states that “Nothing impacts the cost of state government more than inadequately educated citizens, as a great amount of the expense for state services stems from remediating problems that often have their roots in an individual being poorly educated.” **Del. Albo** pointed out that the state government co-funds K-12 education with local governments and decides the minimum standards for the quality of education (SOQ’s) and the minimum things that have to be taught and learned by our kids (SOL’s).

Del. Filler-Corn: “The single greatest expenditure for

any locality is the cost of providing our children with an educational system that will effectively prepare them to take their places as contributing members of adult society and achieve a successful and personally satisfying life. While 60 percent or more of all property taxes and other revenue sources are generally allocated by local governments to their individual school systems each year, the significant additional financial support contributed by state government is absolutely essential if adequate resources are to be available to ensure delivery of first-rate educational services.”

Sen. Ticer: “Our higher education system has a reputation that is the result of careful guidance by the state. Our current high regard and ranking are the direct result of hiring the best existing administration and faculty and then allowing them to do their work.”

Sen. Puller mentioned funding for K-12 and state colleges as her No. 1 priority. She believes that “underfunding our fine educational system not only short-changes our kids but adversely affects our state economy.”



Chairman Bulova concurs: “...” funding is a huge issue. President Merton at George Mason University says they have gone from a state university, to a state-supported university to

receiving a dwindling percentage of funding from the state for operating.”

#3 PUBLIC SAFETY

One of the three most-mentioned ideas from our representatives is the state government’s oversight in the area of public safety. Eight of the 15 cited this area and for five, public safety was in their top three. The Secretary of Public Safety has responsibility for the state police, law enforcement, correctional institutions for adults and juveniles, parole regulations, emergency response in the event of a serious disaster or national peril, and alcoholic beverage control.⁶

Sen. Ticer said, “My second choice would be public safety. The state government has the overarching responsibility to ensure that our communities are safe. Public security has been a core responsibility of the state, and our citizens expect our government to keep them safe and secure. Over

the years, Virginia has developed a reputation for honest, strong, efficient and credible enforcement. This issue is also one over which there is a great deal of discussion as to how we will carry out those obligations, and I think this complicated issue will not be resolved any time soon.”

Del. Filler-Corn sees public safety as her second choice as well. “An essential function of both local and state governments is ensuring the safety of all our citizens, most notable by first responders such as police/sheriffs’ forces, fire departments, and emergency medical services. Adequate funding for personnel, advanced equipment and optimal training capabilities must be made available to localities by the state government, to supplement the fiscal resources that can be raised locally.”

Other legislators who cited public safety were: **Senators Saslaw and Marsden, Delegates Rust, Sickles, Albo, and Jim LeMunyon.**

#4 VOTING LAWS/ELECTIONS

The reach of the Commonwealth of Virginia into our lives as voters was brought home to many northern Virginians on the day of the 2008 primary election, when an ice storm shut down major roads and kept voters from voting in the presidential primary. Frustrated voters insisted that the polls be kept open longer only to discover that the decision had to come from state officials, who were unwilling to allow one area to act autonomously. Yes, the state does control all aspects of registering and voting, usually to good effect but sometimes lacking flexibility. As **Del. Albo** said, “We set up the rules for elections.”

Along with Albo, **Del. Watts, Del. Jim Scott, and Del. Sickles** mentioned what Scott called “making laws and establishing policy for political participation, civic education and voting/elections” among their top 10 ways that citizens are affected by state government.

LWV-VA completed the first part of study of state election laws in April of this year in which it took a look at state laws involving voter registration, a very important



area of state jurisdiction. The study can be accessed at http://lwv-va.org/files/election_laws_study_march_2010.pdf. A consensus was taken locally during May and June unit meetings in which we generally favored making registration more convenient, such as allowing online registration

State law involving registration was regularized, following a period of states' use of registration to deny voting rights, by the federal Voting Rights Act of 1960. It took a later federal level law--the "Motor Voter" Act of 1993--to simplify registration nationwide and to regularize voting for uniformed and overseas citizens.⁷ States are also required (Help America Vote Act of 2002) to create a single database to ensure accurate voter registration lists for all elections

Otherwise, as the League study above suggests, implementation of registration laws is left almost entirely in the hands of the state—to include policies, procedures and administration. One interesting and unique aspect of Virginia law is that no one convicted of a felony may register to vote unless his/her rights have been restored by the governor.

Another registration issue that is on its way to solution is the question of domicile and abode, which affects voters such as college students or other short-time residents. In 2009, the State Board of Elections adopted a Voter Residency Policy that appears to answer a number of discrepancies across the state. On the question of making registration easier, Leaguers feel that the state has a way to go.

In addition to setting the rules for absentee voting, which will be discussed in the upcoming Part 2 of the League study, the state plays a key role in the election process. The April study outlined the details of the three-tiered organization that administers elections, headed by the State Board of Elections. "All Electoral Board members, registrars and election officers are positions established under Virginia's Constitution or Code and are appointed positions."⁸

One more key aspect of elections in Virginia is the role the state legislature plays in redistricting. LWV-VA has studied this area extensively and the studies can be accessed at <http://www.lwv-va.org/redistrict.html>. Suffice it to say that Leaguers favor the drawing of lines for state and congressional voting districts by a bipartisan commission. The argument is that voters should be choosing their representatives rather than the other way around.

#5 HUMAN SERVICES

Of our respondents, seven ranked human services among

the top responsibilities of the state. Sometimes the category was referred to as "social services."

Chairman Bulova

pointed out the state has a primary role in respect to the Community Services Board, "programs for mental health, substance abuse, intellectual disabilities, group homes, assistance for County residents with low income for housing, food and child care. We are partners with the Commonwealth in providing all of these services and depend on funding and sound policies in serving these populations."



Del. Albo put it succinctly: "While the Feds pay for about 1/2 of Medicaid, we pay the other and run the programs and services. While it is over-simplified to say as follows, this is the best way I think I can say it: Other social services are paid by the state, and usually run by local governments."

Sen. Marsden explained that "Virginians are primarily affected by state government through aid that is provided to localities to operate many state-mandated programs in public safety, health and education."

Del. LeMunyon placed social services first on his list but referred to it as a "social safety net for people in need." **Sen. Saslaw** ranked health and human services third, while **Del. Watts** placed social services fourth.

#6 SYSTEM OF COURTS



The mission of Virginia's judicial system is to assure that disputes are resolved justly, promptly, and economically."⁹ Virginia's Court System has six major components:

Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Circuit Court, General District Court, Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court, and the Magistrate System. Court activities flow in part from violations of other state functions, i.e., various

state regulations, DMV/driving rules, public safety.

The Magistrate System serves the Commonwealth through offices in all 32 judicial districts. The magistrates, who are appointed by the Chief Judge of the Circuit Court are a part of the system closest to the citizens. While they issue processes of arrest, search warrants, attachments (seizures of property) subpoenas, and civil warrants. They also administer oaths, issue emergency custody orders and protective orders, among other duties.¹⁰

While the processes of the court system may not affect a majority of Virginians, citizens are liable for jury selection. Jurors are chosen from a pool of names picked by random-selection techniques from current voter registration lists and Department of Motor Vehicle lists.

Delegates Albo, Surovell and Watts were three of the respondents who mentioned the Court System in their listings. For **Del. Surovell** the “State court system--civil and criminal” was No. 3. It was in the top six of **Del. Albo’s** list: “We fund and operate the Courts.” **Del. Watts** ranked the state court system first; reflecting its key role in “state policy in how an individual is treated.”

#7 DMV AND DRIVING REGULATIONS

Four legislators, **Delegates Sickles, Albo, Watts, and Senator Marsden** cited the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as having a significant impact on Virginia citizens. According to its website, the DMV serves a customer base of approximately 5.6 million licensed drivers and ID card holders and 7 million registered vehicle owners. The DMV has more daily face-to face contact with Virginia citizens than any other state agency.¹¹

Del. Marsden stated that “State government is most often the silent partner in an area like Northern Virginia as people look to local government as the primary provider of services. The state plays a very important fiscal and regulatory role however. People in Northern Virginia do not interact with state government very often (except DMV) and most state jobs are located in Richmond or in rural areas where services such as prisons can be located in the most cost effective way.”¹²



#8 REGULATION OF A WHOLE RANGE OF HUMAN ACTIVITY

Because of the Dillon Rule, the Commonwealth plays a vigorous role in a number of human activities. One legislator, **Del. Albo**, perhaps because of his membership on the General Laws Committee of the House of Delegates, is aware of a whole range of state regulations that affect our every day lives.

He listed the following areas that the state regulates:

- We do all of the environmental monitoring and run the parks.
- We do a lot of the regulating of professions (e.g. lawyers, accountants, doctors, plumbers, HVAC, hair dressers).
- We do a lot of regulating of businesses (e.g. weights and measures, nursing homes, health standards for restaurants).
- We set up all the regulations for commerce (e.g. State Corporation Commission for forming corporations, regulating state-granted monopolies like electricity, regulating insurance) and set up the rules for commerce (e.g. Internet transaction rules, sales of goods, UCC rules...).
- We set up the rules for divorce and custody.
- Make sure charities give their \$ and services to charity.
- Set up the rules for driving.
- We sell liquor and regulate all alcohol.

Del. Sickles would add that he has concerned himself with bills that protect homeowners associations and with efforts to attract business to the area, especially in the area of biotechnology. **Del. Kory** feels that our list doesn’t give enough importance to the environment, which she would rank No. 3.

The last item on **Del. Albo’s** list is a concern of **Sen. Puller**, who placed studying the privatization of liquor stores as third on her list. **Del. Ebbin** summarized the legislators’ role: “We are the primary ‘ambassadors’ from state level affairs to citizens.”

Del. Kory sums up the situation in relation to Fairfax County: “There is a major difference between how the state government impacts Fairfax County and the impact it has on the rest of the state. This is largely because of the relative wealth of our county and our historic lack of dependence upon state funding. Of course, state funding is important to Fairfax--but it has usually been able to cover the possible damage that a cut in state funding, for example in education, would cause, because the majority of the FCPS

budget comes from local property taxes funneled through the Board of Supervisors--and this is true of all Fairfax County services except transportation. However, tough economic times have heightened the impact of the loss of state funds in Fairfax, as well as heightened the impact of state governance decisions. “

Sources

¹ Sally Ormsby, et al, “Dillon’s Rule: Good or Bad for Local Government,” October 2004, S-1

² Ibid)

³ Ibid, S-2

⁴ League of Women Voters of Virginia, *Your Virginia Government*, 2004, p. 26

⁵ Ibid, p. 26

⁶ Ibid, p. 28

⁷ Betsy Mayr, et al. “Virginia’s Election Laws: An Update Study—Part 1,” League of Women Voters of Virginia Education Fund, April 2010, p.2

⁸ Ibid, p. 10

⁹ Your Virginia Government, 2004, p. 31

¹⁰ www.courts.state.va.us

¹¹ www.dmv.state.va.us/

¹² Ibid

Fairfax School Cafeterias Change Menu Items

By Virginia Fitz Shea, Schools Committee Chair

Fairfax County elementary schools stopped offering chocolate milk to students this school year, while middle and high schools continue to offer 1 percent chocolate milk as an option. Changes in milk offerings were also seen in District of Columbia public schools, which eliminated chocolate milk offerings at all school levels, and Montgomery County, which now offers flavored milk (chocolate or strawberry) only if it is nonfat milk. Offering flavored nonfat milk is one of the recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine’s Report, *School Meals: Building Blocks for Healthy Children*. According to the IOM report, which was released October 20, 2009, “Currently, a majority of students consume plain milk with a fat content of 2 percent or more or flavored milk with at least 1 percent milk fat.”

The IOM recommended that milk choices be limited to fat free (plain or flavored) and plain low-fat (1 percent milk fat or less). The IOM stated that the inclusion of flavored fat-free milk among the milk options will promote the consumption of milk by students.

According to a press release issued September 3, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) decided not to offer chocolate milk in elementary schools because the dairy providing milk to the school system was unable to comply with a request to eliminate high-fructose corn syrup from the product. The IOM report did not provide a recommendation regarding high fructose corn syrup. The Executive Director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, Michael F. Jacobsen, recently restated his group’s position that high-fructose corn syrup and sugar are nutritionally the same: “The bottom line is that people should consume less of all added sugars.”¹

FNS announced that it will continue to work with manufacturers to reduce added sugar and sodium. No salt is added in food production and table salt will no longer be available. Fairfax will continue to expand the selection of fresh fruits and vegetables and promote daily salad lunch options. Each month, the “Give Me 5! Colors That Jive” program introduces students to new and unfamiliar fruits and vegetables such as jicama, butternut squash and sweet potato wedges. Items are featured on the menu and in flyers on the serving line, and colorful trivia and activity pages are provided to teachers to incorporate into classroom instruction.

FNS will continue to work closely with fresh produce vendors to purchase seasonal, locally-grown produce. Starting in September, fresh peaches, watermelons, carrots, and baked potatoes were added to menus. The federally-funded Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program has been expanded to Annandale Terrace, Hybla Valley, Lynbrook, Mount Vernon Woods, and Weyanoke Elementary Schools; these schools will receive a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as an afternoon snack. A local produce vendor is helping FCPS acquire special items such as raspberries, Asian apples, star fruit and snow peas.

The current whole-grain bread and cereal options will be expanded to include whole-grain pretzels and bagels. Garbanzo and black beans will be added to chef salad recipes.

¹ Michael F Jacobson, “Proposed Name Change for High-Fructose Corn Syrup Still Misleading,” (September 15, 2010). Retrieved from the Center for Science in the Public Interest Web site: <http://www.cspinet.org/new/201009151.html>

“Myths” Program Garners Variety of Suggestions

By Lois Page, Program Director

September’s program on “eleven myths about the League” was received positively by the membership, who felt it provided a different twist on a subject that long-time members have seen several times.

Some members were surprised to learn about how small a portion of our dues supports our local League. They were interested to read about why we have kept the same name in spite of encouraging male members, the fact that we have a National Capitol Area league, the issues on which the League has had pivotal influence, and the difference between consensus and concurrence.

Regarding our effectiveness as advocates, some felt we should have more than one paid lobbyist on the state level and that we aren’t very effective at the regional level. Many said, however, that we are effective locally, more effective than we think. But we must continue to make our responses personal, so that there is not a hint of a mass produced response. One unit pointed out that our loss of members in the 20-50 age group makes us less representative as advocates. One unit felt we need to do more to promote women running for office.

Most members felt that we should not be concerned about backing ideas that tend to favor stands by one party as long as our stands are reached by proper procedures. One member felt that we do need to take another look at our nonpartisan policy as the language is imprecise; that the fact that we do not endorse candidates does not entirely explain nonpartisan. At least one group felt that the definition of consensus is vague and can lead to dissatisfaction with league positions on the part of individual members.

The most important changes in the League were found to be the addition of men, the lessened free time of our members, the way we have adapted to changing times by increasing our use of technology. The latter, some felt, is a mixed bag as it is less personal (e.g. e-mail over phone calls). There is also concern that we are losing our diversity-- age, gender, ethnic and racial diversity. Regarding the addition of men, however, participants were unanimous that we should not change our name; it is our brand.

Some participants were surprised regarding the differences between the Ed Fund and the General Fund but agreed that the tax exemption aspect makes this somewhat cumbersome

distinction necessary. One group made the point that “the processes we use define who we are.”

The discussion about our budget process led to suggestions about what additional sources we might solicit to help fund “Facts for Voters”:

- Any local groups with community interests
- Horizon Banks
- retirement centers like Paul Spring and Greenspring
- Better Business Bureau (MVD)
- COMCAST and FIOS -- since Cox contributes maybe we can reach out to COMCAST, which also serves some in our area
- Burke and Herbert Bank,
- Great American Restaurant Assoc.
- other advocacy groups
- funeral homes
- local foundations

The challenge of reaching our members who cannot or do not attend unit meetings elicited a number of suggestions. One was that we need to make personal contact when we have a general meeting, and these general meetings should involve joint sponsorships. Some wondered if we might reach more technology-minded people through Skype, an approach we understand Anne Thomas is trying with a member who has difficulty attending. We should work harder at targeting federal employees who are constrained from activity in partisan politics. A number liked the idea of short, informational programs called “Lunch and Learn” where people would bring or buy lunch and hear a speaker on a League-inspired topic. Respondents in general, however, said they like unit meetings as they create a bond, and they wish others could experience it.

Regarding briefings and the fact that not all units send a representative, several units replied that Saturdays involve too many conflicts. However, discussion at last month’s board meeting brought up the fact that if discussion leading is passed around, a person should only have to give up one or two Saturdays in year. Weekday meetings have been tried and did not work. Another concern involves the fact that the Packard Center requires attendees to navigate stairs. Some suggested we use the Mason District Governmental Center year-round. Program Director Lois Page emphasized that briefings are crucial to the program process as they iron out difficulties and fill in blanks.

Committee Calls for Nominations to Board Positions for 2011

The LWVFA Nominating Committee is looking for capable people to fill slots on and off the Board, and we need your help. We know some of you have “been there, done that,” but that doesn’t mean you couldn’t return to serve again. All these jobs have been made easier with e-mail and faxes.

10 Myths about Being on LWV Board

1. You have to know a lot.

We all learned from someone else or from the many materials available. Sharing information is nice for both the teacher and the learner, and it happens all the time.

2. You have to have tons of time.

True, you probably can’t do most Board jobs in 30 minutes/week, but many jobs are clearly defined and take only a few hours a week or can easily be worked around your personal schedule. Most jobs can be shared.

3. You have to be good at public speaking, writing, and moderating.

There is sure to be a job that uses the skills you do have, will help you learn new ones, or both.

4. You have to raise money.

Of course, donations help, but unlike many nonprofit Boards, League uses its Board to run the organization, not primarily for fundraising.

5. It’s a lot of work and no play.

Aside from the satisfaction of doing an important job, League members are fun to spend time with – at a voter registration table, at a Board retreat picnic, or at a holiday tea.

6. The meetings are inconvenient.

Board meetings are one day a month, and so are unit meetings. Other meetings you may be interested in are scheduled to reach the widest number of members. Need a ride? Just ask! There’s sure to be someone nearby who can help.

7. You have to go to every meeting.

Certainly not every League meeting. If you share a job, not even every Board meeting. Even if you don’t share,

missing an occasional meeting is not a problem – we all need to travel or spend time with family.

8. You have to do everything in your job description alone.

There’s sure to be another member who would like to help with the skill or job. Interest questionnaires and a question or two will find a committee or one-time helper.

9. You aren’t needed.

In addition to the legal requirements for Board members to keep the League running, there are always places we are asked to help or action we would like to take if we had enough people to stretch that far. We are just waiting for you to join the Board!

10. Someone has to ask you.

Volunteers are welcome! The nominating committee isn’t psychic – perhaps you have more time than you did a couple of years ago, or have an interest you would like to pursue in League. Let someone know! You’ll be glad you did and so will we!!

That is what League is about – working together to get the most done to promote our mission. Everyone has something to offer!

Please volunteer for the Board or send suggestions of other possible candidates to:

Viveka Fuenzalida (Nominating Committee Chair) 11020 Burywood Lane, Reston, VA 20194 703-404-0498 www.vivfuenza@verizon.net

Did You Know . . .

TVs, VCRs, DVD and CD players, cordless phones, microwaves — use energy even when switched off to keep display clocks lit and memory chips and remote controls working. Nationally, these energy “vampires” use 5 percent of our domestic energy and cost consumers more than \$8 billion annually. (Alliance to Save Energy, 2005)

Time to Get Serious About Program Planning

By Lois Page, Program Director

Next month we once again seek member input on issues that members want LWV-VA and LWV NCA to tackle in the 2011-2013 program cycle. In order for this to be a thoughtful process, members need to be prepared with some suggestion before they get to the meeting. Otherwise one person with an axe to grind can take over a unit's planning process.

We asked units in September to make suggestions but somehow it got lost in the flurry of opening League-year business. Only two units have some suggestions, in addition to one made by board member Therese Martin who has suggested that we not do any new studies but instead review the positions we have on existing ones.

Chantilly-Centerville has suggested the following state-wide studies:

- off shore drilling
- immigration in Virginia
- the proposal to sell state-owned ABC stores
- issues surrounding military installations, including BRAC and the impact on the Norfolk area of the proposal to shut down a joint command.

Mount Vernon Day suggests studies state-wide of

- land use
- mental health
- probation.

No suggestions have been made for NCA.

November is not too late to discuss this again, but a unit's ability to lobby other units will have to occur in ways other than in the *VOTER*. Ten or eleven different suggestions do not make for a convincing ground swell of support.

Domestic Violence Remains a Major Problem in Northrn Virginia

By Barbara Nunes, Chair, Domestic Violence

October was domestic violence awareness month. At the September meeting of the Board of Supervisors, a proclamation was given to kick off a large number of events concerning domestic violence and a large group of people interested in combating domestic violence was there to show support.

At the September meeting of the Domestic Violence Prevention Policy Coordinating Committee, (DVPPCC) Erick King, CEO of the Capital Youth Empowerment Program, and Champana Bernand, Quality Assurance Consultant in the Children, Youth and Family Division of the Fairfax Department of Family Services, provided an overview of the Fathers in Touch (FIT) Program. The program involves fathers and their children in various activities in addition to workshops. Programs are offered in various locations in the county throughout the year. The program was developed by of a team of national and international recognized fathering experts and

fathering practitioners. The majority of fathers enrolled in the program are referred by the Department of Family Services social workers. However fathers are able to self refer to the program.

DID YOU KNOW?

- One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her life time.
- Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police.
- Thirty percent of perpetrators of intimate partner violence also abuse children in the household.
- One in five female high school students report being physically and/or sexually abused by a dating partner.
- Nearly 74 percent of Americans know someone who is or has been a victim of domestic violence.

The program focuses on five characteristics—self awareness, self care, fathering skills, parenting skills, and relationship skills. It involves a 12-week fatherhood course, three supervised visitation activities in the community, and presentations from service providers concerning domestic violence, mental health, substance abuse, and effective communication. The program is free and includes dinner and monthly activities with children. Future plans include providing services in Spanish and studies of the program's effectiveness.

Although the program is not domestic violence specific, it reaches out to the domestic violence community by inviting guest speakers from the Department of Family Services DV unit.

WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE **PRE-SESSION FORUM**

Moderated by the League of Women Voters of Virginia

Wednesday, December 1, 2010 9:30 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

House Room 1, underground section of the Capitol addition

Entrance on Bank Street, Richmond, Virginia

Google: "Parking in Richmond Capitol Square" for options

Speakers will provide information on the upcoming legislative session and show how you can make a difference

There is no charge for the morning session.

Followed by a LUNCHEON

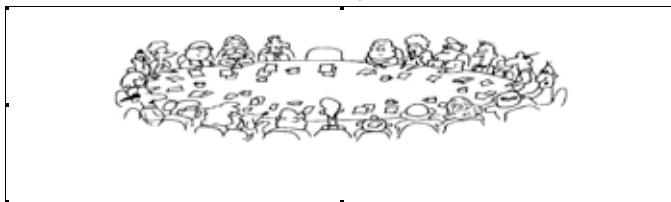
12:15 to 3:00 P.M., Senate Room 3, underground section of the Capitol addition

Preview of legislative proposals expected during the 2011

General Assembly session directly from Legislators

Registration for Luncheon Required and due by **November 19, 2009**

Cost: \$30



Women's Legislative Roundtable, founded in 1981

An information forum at the General Assembly for 29 years

The Women's Roundtable does not take positions on issues, but exchanges information.

www.LWV-VA.org

LUNCHEON RESERVATION -- Please print

Name _____ Email _____

Phone _____

Number of Reservations _____ League or organization _____

Make check out to:

LWV of Virginia

Mail to: **LWV-VA , P.O. Box 621, Centreville, VA 20122-0621 No refunds**

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

Topic: What Does State Government do for You?

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 September 12, 2010, the locations were correct; please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend. Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations.

Saturday, Nov. 6

10 a.m. Briefing/At Large Unit

Mason District Govt. Center
6507 Columbia Pike
Annandale 22003
Contact: Lois, 703-690-0908

12 noon Chantilly/Centreville (CC)

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

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

8739 Cuttermille Place
Springfield 22153
Contact: Kathleen, 703-644-1555

Monday, Nov. 8

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

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

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

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

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

Paul Spring Retirement Community
Mt Vernon Room
7116 Fort Hunt Road
Alexandria 22307
Contact: Kay, 703-765-7104

Wednesday, Nov. 10

10 a.m. McLean (MCL)

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

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, November 18

12 noon Fairfax City Day (FXD)

(Note change of day and place)

Meeting with Vienna Unit

Oakton Public Library
10304 Lynnhaven Place
Oakton 22124
Contact: Joan, 703-978-8715
Bobby, 703-938-1486

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

Mt. Vernon District Govt. Center
2511 Parkers Lane
Alexandria 22306
Contact: Gail, 703-360-6561

Thursday, Nov. 11

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

11029 Burywood Lane
Reston 20194
Contact: Viveka, 703-404-0498

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

9607 Laurel Oak Place
Fairfax Station 22039
Contact: Karen, 703-690-2039

12 noon Vienna (VE)

(Note change of day and place)

Meeting with Fairfax City Day

Oakton Public Library
10304 Lynnhaven Place
Oakton 22124
Contact: Anne, 703-938-7304
(If you'd like to join this meeting via Skype, contact Anne for setup.)

December Meetings:

Local and National Program Planning



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

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

Time Sensitive Materials

The LWVFA *Fairfax VOTER* ©
November, 2010

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 is July 1 through June 30. Current dues year ends June 30, 2011.)

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