



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

Fairfax VOTER

December 2010

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It Is Program Planning Time Again!

This December is your chance to give input to the LWV of Virginia (LWV-VA) and to the LWV of the National Capital Area (LWVNCA). Some folks think program planning (in the League sense) is boring; but really it is a great opportunity for the “grassroots” to sound off about what they think is important. The more people that respond, the more representative are the results. So, look at the issues that the state and regional Leagues have already studied; then tell them what else should be done during 2011-2013! Let’s make sure our voice is heard. See pages 5-10 for background.

Also make your reservation for the General Meeting on January 22, 2011 (see page 12).

Calendar

December

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1 | WRT Pre-Session meeting in
Richmond |
| 2 | First Day of Hanukkah |
| 3 | January Fairfax <i>VOTER</i> deadline |
| 3 | NCA Board meeting |
| 6-13 | Units: Program Planning (NCA &
LWVVA) optional Fairfax
County budget toolkit |
| 15 | Board Meeting |
| 25 | Christmas |
| 26 | Kwanzaa begins |

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The President's Message

My message will be a potpourri of subjects this month. First, we are trying an e-mail update for members that will include all the information that is usually sent out in separate all-member e-mails from the office. It will be in a newsletter format but more colorful, and it is our hope that everyone will read this and be more than happy to have just one e-mail to read rather than several. As with any organization, communications with members, between members, etc. is a major concern and one that we are always working on to improve.

I hope everyone got out and voted! And possibly took a neighbor with you when you did. A minority should not decide the outcome of an election that can influence everyone's daily life. I know people in Virginia get tired of having to vote every year, but that's the way it is. It is our job to get people interested in and knowledgeable about which elections are being held and who is running. This year only the congressional Representatives and town elected officials whose terms expire in 2010 were up for election, but next year it seems everyone is being elected -- State Assembly, Board of Supervisors including the Chair, School Board, Commonwealth's Attorney, Sheriff and Northern Virginia Soil and Water Commissioners. Because of this, next year is **Voters Service year**, and everyone will need to help. Right now the 2011 Election Committee is forming. Contact Rona Ackerman, ackermanrona2@gmail.com, if interested in joining. Please see the notice in this *VOTER*.

There are two days we need to be in Richmond: **December 1 for Pre-WRT session** and **February 2 for League Day**. Please put these dates on your calendars and plan to attend. It is important that our legislators know we are here and watching. Thank you,

Janey

Domestic Violence News . . .

Committee to Meet

Domestic Violence Committee will meet Monday, November 29 at 10 a.m. at the Kings Park Library. Anyone interested, please call Barbara Nunes at 703-451-7238. We begin working on the program for October 2011. We need you....

Welcome to Our Newest Members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to LWVFA:

Nancy Yane-Fernald, Alexandria; Renee Loeffler (a national member), Reston; Jean Jensen, Alexandria; Robinson and Danielle Ramirez, Fairfax; Paul Spielberg, Vienna; Mary Duggan, Oakton; Sheila Iskra, Alexandria; Joan Shoemaker, McLean; Marion Brown, Fairfax; Rose Kobylinski, Fairfax, and Carol Banks, Springfield.

General Meeting Scheduled for January 22

It's that time of year again. 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 the reservation form elsewhere in the *VOTER*. Deadline for lunch reservations is January 14, 2011.

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2010 - 2011

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or call 703-658-9150

Units Provide Feedback on Food Safety and Health Concerns

By Karole McKalip, Program Assistant

Reminiscing, voicing concerns, challenging facts, considering alternatives could be heard at the October unit meetings, where members explored the safety of our food system in its regulation, production, processing and transportation. The topic as presented was broadly covered and elicited wide-ranging reactions. For some, the subject was too broad and could have been divided into smaller sections. But many members thought the material was well-balanced and easy to read.

Sharing memories of how food was prepared and delivered in the “olden days” (home deliveries, no frozen foods, canning, iceboxes) led to examining the advantages of the current food system over past practices. Fresh foods are available year-round; convenience foods, ethnic foods, and a greater variety provide cheaper and more appealing offerings to consumers.

Areas of Concern

The advantages of mass production, convenience, and transportation come with concerns about the environment, people’s health, and the loss of small family farms. Several units voiced their reservations over the use of pesticides, chemicals, contaminants, and additives in food production and processing (Reston Evening, Briefing, Dinner, Mt. Vernon Evening, Greenspring). The impact of these on consumers, including growing children, and on our environment needs greater investigation and study into the consequences of such usage. Processed and convenience foods are contributing to the growing obesity of our citizens (Dinner, Chantilly/Herndon) as well as the size of restaurant portions (Briefing). Food marketing techniques entice people to consume unhealthy quantities (Reston Evening).

The political influence of agri-business was of concern (McLean) and the federal subsidies it receives were seen as neither justified nor needed (Mt. Vernon Evening). The effects of food subsidies were questioned by those at the Briefing. Industrial farming causes many environmental issues and the scale of farming introduces more chances of harm (Reston Evening).

The Springfield unit thought some concerns, e.g. dangers of pesticides, hormones and genetically modified foods were unproven or overstated.

Several units (Briefing, Mt. Vernon Day and Evening, Reston

Evening, Dinner, Springfield) commented on the need of effective federal regulation of the food industry. There are insufficient resources for an incredibly big job; oversight is fragmented between the FDA and the USDA; inspections of food imports are of concern; food producers who have repeated infractions do not face serious consequences.

Changes to Food Intake

A number of measures are being taken to counter some of the pitfalls in our food system. Eating less was suggested by Mt. Vernon Evening; watching fat, sodium, and sugar intake, becoming aware of food additives, and reading nutritional ingredient labels were discussed at the Dinner unit. However, Reston Evening saw difficulties in keeping up with new food industry definitions and terms.

Buying locally produced foods and attending farmers’ markets were recommended by Fairfax Station/Fairfax Day, Mt. Vernon Evening, and the Briefing units. Some in the Dinner unit suggested buying organic foods, but according to comments at the Briefing, the USDA does not define organic. Mt. Vernon Day concurred. The definition of organic is often loose and items do not have to be 100 percent organic.

Additional Information Needed

But in order to make appropriate changes and become food literate, members saw a need for more simplified language (Chantilly/Herndon); more information on produce containing high levels of pesticides (Mt. Vernon Evening); and understanding good vs. bad additives (Briefing). Regarding genetically modified foods, Mt. Vernon Day asked if such foods should be labeled, and Fairfax Station/Fairfax Day felt more studies were needed in this area. Some in the Dinner and Chantilly/Herndon units suggested that hearing opinions and views from the food industry would add a balance to the discussions.

Some Recommended Resources

- *Nutrition Action*, a monthly magazine published by the Center for Science and the Public Interest (Mt. Vernon Evening, Fairfax Station/Fairfax Day)
- Food Inc. (Mt. Vernon Day, Vienna Evening, and Chantilly/Herndon)
- Works by Michael Pollan (Greenspring)
- *The End of Overeating* by David. Kessler and Health Literacy by Helen Osborne (Reston Evening)
- *Literacy from A to Z*, Omnivore’s Dilemma, The China Study, Designing Health
- Messages, The End of Everything, Food Inc., The World According to Monsanto, The Lacuna, Edible History of Humanity (Briefing)

In the Spotlight . . .



**Janet Al-Hussaini,
Action Director**

Our Action Director, Janet Al-Hussaini, has wide-ranging interests -- in healthcare, environmental sustainability and the Middle East, among other subjects. She grew up in a rural area near White Sulphur Springs, N.Y., earned a B.S. in nursing from Alfred University in New York, and met her future

husband, Muayad Ahmad Showki Al-Hussaini, when he was a urology resident at Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, N.Y. They were married in Iraq and lived in Mosul more than two years. Later they settled in Hammondsport, N.Y., and moved to Northern Virginia in 1998. They have two married daughters, Kismet and Yasamin.

Janet is a relatively new member of LWVFA; she joined the Reston Unit in 2009, very quickly became active on the Environmental committee, and was elected Action Director in April 2010. She is also program chair of the Great Falls group of the Sierra Club and a member of the D.A.R. Previously she has hosted an Annual International Diplomatic Series as Alfred University/Community intermediary, served as president of county medical and hospital auxiliaries and on the Board of Directors of the Hornell (N.Y.) YMCA.

Since moving to Virginia, she has earned her Master's in Individualized Studies, with a concentration in anthropology ("Washing Hands in a Sea of Development: Community Participation in Water-related Health Education in the Republic of Yemen") from George Mason University. Additionally, Janet has studied Middle East history and Arabic language at Northern Virginia Community College, the University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan, and at George Mason University at Sana'a, Yemen.

She is currently taking a course at the Writing Center in Bethesda, and plans to accompany her husband on International JCHO surveys to note the culture of healthcare and environmental concerns.

Janet loves reading, writing, literacy, socio-cultural activities, gardening, traveling, biking, hiking, collaborative project design and implementation. She lists her primary accomplishments as: Maintain joy in a cross-cultural family, Value equity and justice for "the other," Appreciate risks, benefits of environmental sustainability.

Open Letter to League Members . . .

Suggestions for Revitalization of the Observer Corps

Dear Leaguers,

We believe some changes are needed to revitalize the Observer Corps and offer a few suggestions.

We hope to create a variety of opportunities for League members to take action and at the same time engage members of inactive committees or members who have expressed specific interests yet have not directly participated.

We suggest that members identify League positions that are personally important to them and pair up to follow those issues by attending local meetings and monitoring news items, pending legislation, new books or documentaries. The Board could provide a sign-up list of League positions, suggested observation opportunities and strategies.

Working in pairs would offer observers social support and the opportunity to learn from each other. This system would also provide backup so no one person would be burdened with a huge task. Reporting would be minimal too -- simply sending Helen and Janet a short paragraph each month summarizing what they have learned.

Revitalizing the Observer Corps would add to our collective knowledge over time and enable a higher level of participation on issues that are key to the electoral process.

We welcome your thoughts about our proposal.

Janet Al-Hussaini
Helen Kelly

Election 2011 Committee Needs Members!

Every local office is up for election in 2011. We expect about 100 candidates to be running for these offices, and most districts will be redrawn for these elections. The Election 2011 Committee has been charged with determining how LWVFA can provide the best service to our voters. Should we sponsor debates, conduct individual candidate interviews, or produce more fliers like "What's on the Ballot?" How do we publicize the new districts and make sure voters are aware of the changes? Join the Election 2011 Committee and help us plan our strategy! Contact Rona Ackerman at 703-476-5758 or ackermanrona2@gmail.com to participate.

What Should the Program Be for LWV-VA and LWNCA From 2011 to 2013?

Compiled by Lois Page, Program Director and
Sherry Zachry, Outreach Director

A quick course in League “program planning:”

The League of Women Voters can only take a position if the membership has come to consensus or a concurrence on that topic. Consensus is agreement among a substantial number of League members, representative of the group as a whole—not just a simple majority—reached after sustained study and group discussion. Concurrence is agreement by members with a position on an issue reached by a small group of members (i.e., a committee or a board) or by another League. Concurrence is like a vote for or against the statement as proposed.

The first step involves members selecting a program item that they believe warrants League study (or update) and action. Once a program item is approved, a “study” is written and presented for discussion, during which League members are expected to examine all sides of the issue. If there is substantial agreement on the topic among the members, with only *minor* disagreement, the respective League Board will consider a consensus or concurrence to have been reached and will create a statement on the topic which becomes the “position” on which to advocate (take “action”).

Ideas for new programs originate at the local League level (hence, “grassroots”), where members are encouraged to think about the widest possible range of choices. In the Fairfax Area League, program planning is done every year in the month of December (state and regional program planning in December of even-numbered years; local and national in December of odd-numbered years). The following criteria should be used when proposing a program item:

- Can the issue be resolved by government action?
- At what level (local, regional, state or national)?
- Does the League have a position at any level that could address the specific issue?
- Can the League’s involvement make a difference?
- Is there enough enthusiasm for the topic?
- Do we have the resources (people and money) to work on this?

Using reports from all participating units, the ideas are reviewed and discussed by the LWVFA board, which then submits a recommended program (based upon the guidelines required by the respective Leagues) to the Leagues involved. Collecting the suggestions from all Leagues, the LWV-VA and LWNCA boards will then propose a recommended program to be acted upon by the delegates at their respective conventions in 2011. The LWV-VA Convention will be April 30-May 1 in Blacksburg; NCA will be May 7 in D.C.

The December program planning unit meeting is your opportunity to familiarize yourself with the League’s positions—to question whether a position is still valid or if

the issue needs to be updated or revisited. It is your chance to suggest new areas that the League can examine, study, and discuss. Included in this material are the condensed positions of the LWNCA and the Positions-In-Brief for LWV-VA. Reviewing the positions already in place may help you when considering whether to propose a new topic for study (that is not already covered by the current positions) or whether an update of an existing position is needed. After unit discussion, select one of the following options for each position:

- **Retain** - Assumes there is still member understanding of, and agreement with, the position.
- **Update** - Means there is new information to expand or change the position that may or may not lead to a consensus or concurrence.
- **Drop** - If dropped, no action can be taken under that position in the future. A position should be dropped if it is so out of date that it is no longer applicable or a new study is warranted.
- **Take Action** – this means that elected officials should be educated about the League’s position on the issue through advocacy and action.

LWV-VA PROGRAM PLANNING FOR 2011-2013:
(A report form will be available at unit meetings accompanied by additional information on Steps Four and Five.)

Step One: Decide if there are any current LWV-VA

positions you feel should be dropped.

Step Two: Decide what you would like a state-wide committee to study or update

Below are some ideas that have been suggested in the units to consider as topics for the state League; you may also add your own. Prioritize any suggestions you make; try to limit your list to no more than two new study suggestions

New study suggestions:

1. No new studies but a review of all of our current positions
2. Off-shore drilling
3. Immigration in Virginia
4. Selling state-owned ABC stores
5. Issues surrounding military installations, to include BRAC-affected areas and the impact on the Norfolk area of the proposal to shut down a joint command.
6. Land use (update?)
7. Mental health (update?)
8. Probation issues
9. A study of the powers of governor, lieutenant governor, and attorney general in Virginia in comparison with those of several other states. Would include those powers not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution but which have evolved over the years.

Suggestion For Action:

Push for ways to increase voter participation

Step Three: Record names of people interested on working on the choices your unit makes.

Step Four: Discuss two new items on the LWV-VA report form that have come from the state Program Director and fill in responses as appropriate.

1. Narrow LWV-VA focus for 2011-13 to “good government issues” with a Director for those issues
2. Review ALL positions for consistency, clarity, and timeliness as the programs for 2011-13 (Would you like to help?)

Step Five: Review initial responses in light of Step Four and make changes, if appropriate.

League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWV-VA)

Positions in Brief 2009~ A Summary of Position Statements. For full positions, see *Positioned for Action*, on the website: www.LWV-VA.org

GOVERNMENT

DELEGATION OF POWER (1972, 1991)

Support for a balanced partnership between state and local government, including:

- Policies and incentives that promote regional coordination and local action.
- Establishment of uniform powers and responsibilities of local governments by changing the distinctions between cities, counties, and towns.
- Coordination of activities and programs of local jurisdictions.
- Solving problems which cross jurisdictional lines.

ELECTION LAWS (1995)

Support for laws and policies that facilitate and increase registration and voting, including:

- Requirements that localities provide places and times for registration convenient to all segments of the community.
- Procedures that facilitate and expand the use of absentee ballots.
- Mandatory training for election officials.
- Early Voting: Extension of voting period up to one month, including Saturday and Sunday voting.

FISCAL POLICY (1964, 1977, 1979)

Support for a responsible state fiscal policy that includes:

- A flexible and diverse tax structure that is based on a progressive income tax.
- Continuous evaluation of all programs for need, effectiveness, efficiency, and economy.
- Flexibility in developing local sources of revenue.
- Increased state commitment to funding of state-mandated programs.
- Opposition to constitutional or statutory limits on state/local government spending or revenue sources.

REAPPORTIONMENT & REDISTRICTING (1985, 2007)

Support for the establishment, in law, of a politically balanced and independent 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.

TRANSPORTATION (1996)

Support for regionally balanced transportation systems which efficiently and economically meet regional needs without adversely affecting planned growth or the environment.

- Regional organizations, that set policy for a multi-modal public transportation program, that plan, coordinate, and are the designated recipients of federal and state funds, that operate or contract for services, and that could have taxing power.
- A mixture of public (federal, state, and local) and private funding for public transportation.
- Increased local participation with some public funds utilized to encourage private support and the use of innovative financing methods, such as tax incentives to encourage private sector participation.
- The use of a variety of incentives to increase the use of public transportation.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND VIRGINIA LAW (1980, 1983)

Support for the legal recognition of marriage as an equal partnership, including:

- Policies that recognize non-monetary as well as monetary contributions to a marriage by each partner.
- Surviving spouse policies that specify that if one spouse dies without a will, the surviving spouse should inherit all property.
- Divorce policies that recognize separately acquired property before marriage and during marriage through gifts or inheritance.
- Elimination of the concept of "fault" in the court's division of marital property.
- Legal recognition of valid pre-nuptial contracts.

NATURAL RESOURCES**AIR QUALITY (1989)**

Support for achieving and maintaining acceptable air quality through:

- Adoption of strict vehicle emission standards.
- Development of less polluting alternative fuels.
- Programs and regulations that foster efficient transportation modes.
- Support for limiting smoking in public to designated areas so that nonsmokers are not exposed to smoke.

LAND USE (1975)

Support for state policies that include:

- Creation of a state long-range comprehensive land use plan coordinated with local and regional plans.
- State protection of critical environmental areas through

some land use controls.

- Assistance to and increased flexibility for localities in land use planning and control.

WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION (1983)

Support for a comprehensive state effort to protect the water supplies, including:

- Recognition of the connection between ground and surface water.
- Decision making based on the concept of sharing in the use of ground water.
- State responsibility for the collection of information on water resources and planning for future use.
- Land use policies that guarantee protection of water resources.

SOCIAL POLICY**ADULT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (1992)**

Support for addressing the crime of adult domestic violence through:

- Uniform law enforcement including mandatory arrest, reporting.
- Educational and training programs for medical, clerical, law enforcement personnel, and the public on the problem of adult domestic violence as well as conflict resolution.
- Assistance and job training programs for victims.

CHILD CARE (1988)

Support for state policies that promote quality child care that is affordable, accessible, and available, including:

- Minimum comprehensive state license standards for child care facilities.
- Incentives for development of child care programs.
- Financial assistance for low income families.
- Coordinated resource and referral systems.
- Training for care givers and parents.

CHILDREN AT RISK (1989)

Support for state and local policies that recognize the basic needs of all children including shelter, family/community support, health care, food, education, and personal safety, including:

- Funding of preventive services, rehabilitative programs, family support programs, crises services, court costs, and detention.
- Evaluations of programs and services.
- State mandated case planning and case management systems to assure timely access to services.
- Internal and judicial grievance procedures.

EDUCATION

Part I Funding (1991, 1993)

Support for state funding for public schools that insures a high quality education with equal educational opportunities for all children, including:

- Full funding for the Standards of Quality.
- Increasing the state's share of education costs.
- Full state funding of mandates.
- Funding for half-day pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk children and full-day kindergarten programs.
- State funding for some portion of capital costs.
- Improving the funding formula for determining local ability to pay and using it as a basis for distribution of state education funds.

Part II Quality Education (1997, 1999, 2003)

A challenging curriculum, high expectations of students and teachers in mastering that curriculum, and appropriate assessments of student achievement. The League believes the following elements are essential for a quality education:

- Four core disciplines: English, Mathematics, Science, History and Social Studies;
- Art, Music, Physical Education, Health and Foreign Languages;
- Analytical skills, application of knowledge and decision-making;
- Technology integrated throughout the curriculum;
- Strong remedial programs implemented at the earliest indication of a student's academic weakness;
- Special offerings for at-risk and gifted students and educational programs for students with special needs, using specified minimum standards;
- Education for students with limited English proficiency, in which emphasis is placed on teaching English;
- Career and Technical education;
- Professional education of principals and teachers and on going staff development;
- Class size appropriate to instructional goals; a safe environment for students and staff; and discipline, providing preventative programs and a well-defined system of rules, consistently enforced;
- Guidance Counselors for academics and support services;
- Parental and community support and involvement;
- Opportunities to select a specific program or school. These opportunities should be based on a system of equity so that all qualified students have equal access.

The LWV-VA believes that the following are important elements of quality education in the public system, K-12:

1. School-based teamwork, goal-setting and decision-making

2. Application of learning to life experiences in further education, work, and leisure activities.
3. Incentives, recognition, and awards for both students and teachers.

JUSTICE (1970s)

Support for a judicial system that serves all people without discrimination, including:

- Judicial selection by the General Assembly with use of a nominating commission of lay persons and lawyers.
- Sentencing by judges, not juries, with the availability of a pre-sentencing report.
- Corrections system that is adequately funded, efficiently administered, and humane.
- Corrections system that protects society and rehabilitates offenders, while offering deterrence, diversion, protection, and restitution programs.
- Local jails and community-based corrections facilities that are professionally administered and use community resources in the rehabilitation and treatment of prisoners.

JUVENILE/ADULT RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (2005)

Support for the values and principles of restorative justice for juveniles and adults; support for development locally and at the state level of activities, programming and training consistent with these values and principles in responding to crime. This option should be offered at the earliest possible time in the process, with juveniles being given preference if funds are limited.

Persons to be involved: for Juveniles: victims, schools, family, juvenile justice system, community, offender, restorative justice volunteers, trained attorneys, judges; for Adults: victims, adult education programs, family, adult correction system, community, offender, trained attorneys, judges, volunteers, Restorative Justice Association of VA. Programs or practices to be offered as options: Victim-offender dialogue (variety of models): Activities addressing anger management, accountability, empathy for the victim and the impact of crime; mental health screening and substance abuse programs; Jobs and skills training; family counseling.

Consider case by case the needed involvement of community and/or family members, trained volunteers, attorneys, judges, social services, family counselors, and after school programs. And, in all cases protect privacy of victims, offenders and others. Local courts, social agencies and trained volunteers should collect data from programs.

In coordination with the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Restorative Justice Association of VA the legislature

or administrative agencies should develop standards and measures of evaluation. Measures of evaluation should include: victim satisfaction, offender compliance, extent harm was repaired, recidivism, benefit to the community, use of community service that develops skills.

JUVENILE JUSTICE (1974,1978, 1997)

Support for a juvenile justice system, funded by both the state and local governments, that emphasizes prevention and rehabilitation, with:

- Prevention programs that include community programs, education and recreation programs for young children and family and parenting support.
- Rehabilitation programs that provide treatment and training to meet the needs of each child and include counseling, vocational training and accredited academic programs.
- Alternative education programs or community service for juveniles who have been expelled or suspended from school or paroled from correctional facilities.
- In- and out- patient mental health and substance abuse programs oriented to the needs of juveniles.
- Pre- and post-dispositional community-based programs
- Establishment of small group homes.
- Removal of juveniles from jails.

- Continuation of the Department of Juvenile Justice as a separate department with adequate funding.

CIVIL RIGHTS OF FELONS IN VIRGINIA (2009)

Position in Brief:

The League of Women Voters of Virginia believes that the civil rights of felons, regardless of the nature of their crime, should be restored automatically upon their release from incarceration or upon completion of probation or parole and that the process should be easy to understand, accessible, transparent and fair with information about the process made available to all.

MENTAL HEALTH (1987,1988, 1989)

Support for a comprehensive state public mental health care system of quality, statewide and community based services that meets the mental health needs of all Virginians, including:

- Long-range planning, coordination among agencies, and the use of established criteria for allocation of funds.
- Assistance in providing adequate and appropriate housing for the mentally ill.
- Comprehensive and consistent service delivery in all local communities.
- Advocacy programs that ensure patients' rights at all levels.

LWV NCA PROGRAM PLANNING FOR 2011-2013:

The LWVNCA offers the following suggestions for program topics to be considered by Local Leagues. We should note that NCA will be finishing the two 2009-11 studies (electricity and water) and may have some further recommendations to consider for the next biennium (see below). LWVFA units should follow the steps listed below to determine their NCA Program Planning recommendations for 2011-2013; use the following format to report your input to LWVFA Program Director Lois Page (report form will be available at unit meetings).

1. Decide whether you want to readopt all current LWVNCA positions. Current positions are printed at the end of this section. The LWVNCA Board recommends that all current positions be readopted so that they are available for action should the need arise.
2. Review and discuss the following ideas developed by the NCA Program Development Committee: (Note: expanded explanations of these suggestions were not available by press time but should be on hand for unit meetings)
 - New Study: Metro
 - New study: Analysis of the carbon footprint our area generates
 - Update: Continue water study to concentrate on clean water. Add any additional suggestions of your own.

They must be regional in scope.

3. Considering all ideas from Items 1 through 3, decide which ones you endorse, if any, and select the top two from items 2 and 3.
4. Ask for any volunteers willing to work on the issues and for any ideas as to potential partners or resources.
5. Ask for any volunteers willing to work on the issues and for any ideas as to potential partners or resources.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA (LWVNCA)

Positions in Brief 2010

(Editors note: the following positions have been condensed by LWVFA editors because of space limitations. The full text

of these positions can be found on the NCA website—www.lwvnca.org—and will also be available at unit meetings.)

AIRPORTS

LWVNCA supports:

1. Balanced use of the three major metropolitan Washington airports [Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI), Washington Dulles International (IAD), and Ronald Reagan Washington National (DCA)] based on overall airport infrastructure and capacity, to include good ground transportation.
2. Limits on the use of DCA, especially in regards to density, perimeter rules and aircraft type.
3. Planning by local jurisdictions for developments around airports.

BELTWAY SAFETY

LWVNCA supports measures for Beltway and feeder roads that

1. Control speeding.
2. Increase truck safety.
3. Establish weight and length limitations for commercial vehicles.
4. Coordinate inspection and enforcement activities among federal state and local governments.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PLANNING

LWVNCA supports:

1. Governmental regulations of health planning.
2. Regional coordination among health systems.
3. Regional implementation of health education and information services to the public.
4. The concept of 24-hour clinics & the use of paraprofessionals.
5. Improved care for the elderly and emphasis on community support as an alternative to long-term institutional nursing care.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

LWVNCA supports:

1. The use of marijuana and heroin for medicinal purposes.
2. Testing for illegal drug use as part of the hiring process for jobs affecting public safety and national security.
3. A fair process for employees who test positive.
4. Measures for solving the drug problem to include interdiction, enforcement, education/prevention, and treatment.
5. Public funding for drug treatment programs in all metropolitan areas with priority for those under 18 and pregnant women.
6. Drug treatment for users convicted of crimes, to

include outreach nurses and counselors for pregnant drug users.

7. Financial responsibility for drug treatment to include: insurance, patients, patients' families, governments (federal, state, and local), employers, and labor unions.
8. Long range planning through COG to explore area treatment and funding needs.

D.C. FINANCING

LWVNCA supports:

1. Budget autonomy for the District of Columbia over locally raised funds.
2. Measures to provide a stronger and more predictable revenue base.

LAND USE/HOUSING

LWVNCA supports: A coordinated and comprehensive approach to make available adequate, balanced and quality housing.

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

LWVNCA supports:

1. The Council of Governments (COG) as the basic cooperative regional planning instrument.
2. Sufficient authority and funding powers for COG and provisions for citizen participation.

TRANSPORTATION

LWVNCA supports:

1. Public transportation that is available to all, that is encouraged, convenient, involves citizen participation, and has dedicated tax revenues.
2. Education programs that convey the advantages of public transportation.
3. Reduction of subsidies for automobile use.
4. Regional planning for a broad range of transportation issues.

WATER RESOURCES

LWVNCA supports:

1. Conservation and protection of drinking water and supply sources.
2. Programs to reduce per capita water use.
3. Regional planning for emergency restrictions on water use, for recycling water and for water sharing.
4. Protection of ground water.
5. Measures to identify additional water sources but only after other options have been exhausted.
6. Regional planning to improve waste water treatment.

FY 2012 Do-It-Yourself Budget Toolkit - Fairfax County

By Lois Page, Program Director

(The following material, somewhat edited, from the County website: Department of Management and Budget, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/> represents an optional addition to your unit's December program. Since we are always asked to give input on the County budget, it would be beneficial to solicit this input more widely from our members. If your group meets in a library, you should be able to gather around a computer there and pull up the website and the video, which is a bit over 13 minutes long. Otherwise you will need someone with a laptop and wi fi or to gather around a desk computer where you meet.)

“The **Do-It-Yourself Budget Toolkit** gives residents, community groups and organizations the opportunity to host individual group discussion sessions about the FY 2012 budget. You will learn of the big picture but you can also choose to focus on the issues that matter most to you. Follow the five easy steps below: “

Step 1: Gather a Group

Groups should be between **4 and 12 people**; if you have more than 12, break into multiple groups. Groups should have both a dedicated **facilitator** and **note taker**.

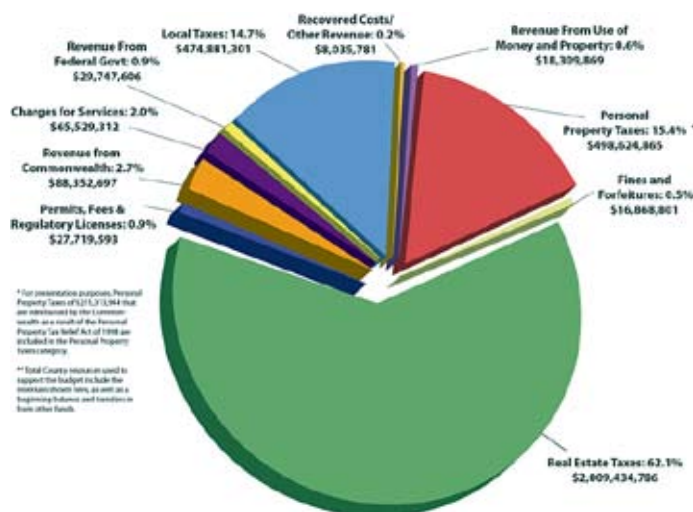


Figure 1. – Where The Funds Come From

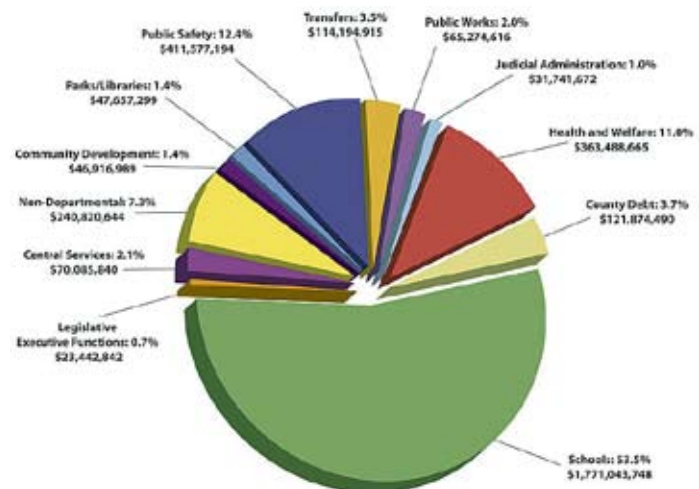


Figure 2. – Where the Funds Are Used

Step 2: Watch Video to be found at the following URL:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2012/diy/>

Step 3: Review Background [budget] Documents (can be found on the website mentioned above) such as “Where It Comes From” Pie Chart, “Where It Goes” Pie Chart, Budget Facts and Budget Reductions: 2011.

Step 4: Discuss Framework Questions: Encourage all group members to participate in an **open group discussion**, starting with these framework questions:

- 1) Based on your experience, **which budget decisions the last two years** were: a.) most acceptable? b.) least acceptable? Please list your top three for each.
- 2) Budgeting requires a balance of priorities based on what community members value about Fairfax County. Considering the budget video, supporting documents and your group discussion, **What strategies would you use to balance the FY 2012 budget?**

Step 5: Summarize your findings and return your summary with your unit report to loismpage@cox.net, or 7902 Bracksford Court, Fairfax Station VA. 22039]

Action Faction . . .

Highlights from the BOS October 19 Meeting

By Janet Al-Hussaini, Action Director

- The Board approved Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 11012 for the Department of Family Services to accept funding from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) in the amount of \$2,907,000. This grant will allow for the continuation of the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) in FY 2011 to provide preschool programs for at-risk 4-year-olds.
- It also approved the creation of Small Sanitary Districts for refuse collection service. Administrative responsibility is with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services.
- Members heard the September 2010 status report on the Board's Four-Year Transportation Program for FY 2008 through FY 2011 regarding hot lanes, Dulles rail, pedestrian program and bike lanes.
- A contract was awarded to make public sewer available to seven properties located in the Langley Forest Subdivision in the Dranesville District of Fairfax County.



~ You are cordially invited to attend ~



The LWV of the Fairfax Area
General Meeting

Saturday, January 22, 2011

COUNTRY CLUB OF FAIRFAX
5110 Ox Road (Route 123 & Braddock Roads)
Fairfax VA 22030
10 a.m. – Registration & coffee

10:30 a.m.

Domestic Violence Today
Mehagen D. McRae. Esq

12:00 noon –Luncheon
(Reservations required for luncheon only)

Luncheon Reservation Deadline January 14, 2011— 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, Dessert, Coffee Service

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

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

2011 General Meeting, 10172 Turnberry Place, Oakton, VA 22124

Name _____ Lunch @\$35 ea. _____

Phone Number & E-mail _____

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

Total \$ enclosed _____

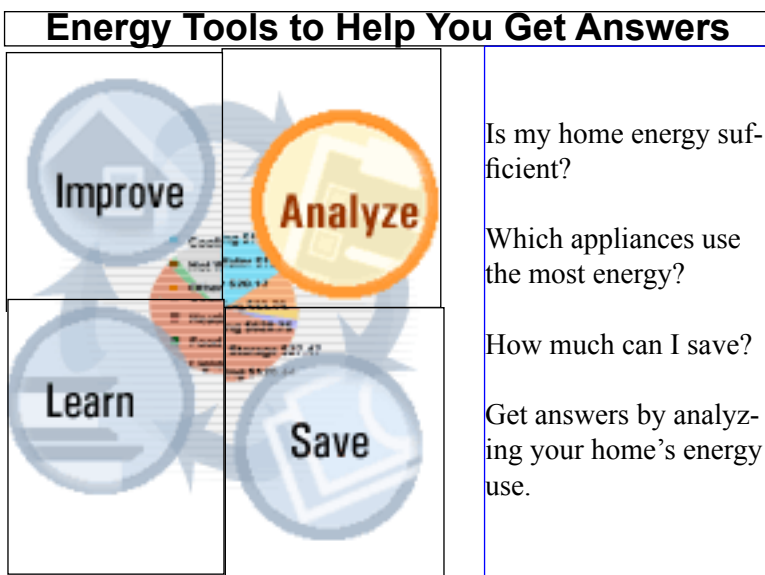
For special dietary needs or questions, call Mary at 703-319-2185

Just in Time for Fall . . .

Dominion Power Offers an Energy Calculator for Home Heating Costs

Ed Note: As part of LWVFA's commitment to passing along energy-saving tips when possible, please consider submitting your energy profile to Dominion Power to see if you can save more than you may think you can.

Fall brings cooler weather and the perfect opportunity to check on ways to better insulate your home. Try Home Energy Center for ways to stay warmer and spend less money on heating. To take advantage of the Energy Calculator, go to Dominion's web site <http://www.energyguide.com/ha/Welcome.aspx?referrerid=244&sid=461>.



Also of note, Tim Sargeant, Manager of State and Local Affairs for Dominion Virginia Power—and one of our supporters for “Facts for Voters”—sent along word of this service. In addition, he said, “Dominion is doing a number of other things regarding energy conservation, such as pilot programs involving Smart Meters. Here is a link to information about our exist-

ing smart meter pilot programs in the Charlottesville and Midlothian areas. <http://www.dom.com/about/conservation/about-smartmeters.jsp> “In addition,” stated Sargent, “Dominion will soon start another pilot program in northern Virginia, where we are in the process of deploying about 30,000 Smart Meters.”



State Senator George Barker, Lois Page, and Neil McBride chat in front of the League's and Turning Point Suffragist Memorial booth at the Clifton Day Celebration. League members handed out voter information and answered questions of the many folks who stopped by to visit.

Fairfax County Introduces NewsWire

Fairfax County has a **new, countywide comprehensive news and engagement website that will serve as the central place for you to find information.** This new website, called the Fairfax County NewsWire at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news, features:

- one master list of all news published by county agencies;
- more than 40 topic, location, and social media RSS news feeds and includes specific content for Tysons, Reston, and other major areas of the county;
- multiple ways for people to get information (e-mail, news feeds, social media, video, audio, mobile, text messages, and more).

Your feedback is welcome at webcontent@fairfaxcounty.gov

Native American Presentation Urges a Return to Traditional Interaction With Nature

By Lois Page, Program Director

Elkhorn Vaughan and four Native American colleagues spoke to a combined meeting of LWVFA and the Great Falls chapter of the Sierra Club on 10.10.10, a day designated as "Global Awareness Initiative" country wide. Collectively they expressed their belief that the planet is being abused and that returning to some of the closely held beliefs of the Native Americans would help to stave off ecological disaster.

Elkhorn began the presentation by telling a story, "The Legend of the Cedar Tree," the point of which is we should be careful what we wish for and we should seek moderation in all things.

Aio "Blue Heron" Sifu gave a talk about living water. Her emphasis was on honoring the laws of nature, taking no more than we need, and giving back. She pointed out that dancing stars are news, disappearing species are not. We need to cooperate with the ways things are.

Ron "Silverwolf" Henry described his presentation as Mother Earth Science. He reviewed some of the basic rules of energy: nothing happens unless you ask for it, like attracts like, what goes around comes around, and chaos occurs. One point he made with the use of a DVD was that a study of argon atoms revealed that we are all linked together through the air we breathe; that we are 60 percent water and it also connects us, and that all of our energy originated in fire (sunlight). He and his source criticized economists who externalize the real world. They should be thinking instead about how much it would cost us to do the services that nature does for nothing. If we destroy part of nature, we have to pay to replace those services.

Tiombe "Daksi" Vaughan, Elkhorn's teenage daughter and an animal lover and accomplished horsewoman, disputed the notion that humans are a higher life form than the animals. Animals have some human DNA. The Indian oral tradition of a covenant with the animals has been broken, and she predicts that the animals will rebel. The plants have taken pity on the animals, but we are messing with the plants too.

Elkhorn completed the presentation with some observations about the current state of our planet. Both the Mayan and some Indian calendars predict some sort of major change

as of Dec. 21, 2012. He speculated on some possibilities: a change of consciousness, a change in the planet's magnetic field (which has happened before), an asteroid, or disastrous effects of planet warming such as the desertification of the southwest, the devastation of the southwest by oil, coal and uranium mining.

He included a warning about the disappearing bee population, which some feel will be gone by 2035. Since 3/4 of Earth's plants require some sort of natural pollinator to reproduce, that could be trouble.

As an example of the long-time native understanding of the balance needed, he pointed out how Indians knew to plant corn, beans and squash together. The beans are able to climb on the corn stalks and the squash covers the ground and keeps off the weeds. No monoculture for them.

His advice in general: respect the creator and all of creation, all life is sacred and related, no life is more important than another life, all life prospers and is sustained by keeping the balance. "Even the frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives."

The program concluded with the sharing of traditional food brought by the speakers, including a dish that combined corn, squash, and beans.

The presentation was taped by Jim Southworth of In Scoop Productions and will be made available some time in the near future.

Some Interesting Information . . .

"ELECTION Day is nearly upon us, but for many voters it has already come and gone. States have aggressively expanded the use of early voting, allowing people to submit their ballots before Election Day in person, by mail and in voting centers set up in shopping malls and other public places. More than 30 percent of votes cast in the 2008 presidential race arrived before Election Day itself, double the amount in 2000. In 10 states, more than half of all votes were cast early, with some coming in more than a month before the election. Election Day as we know it is quickly becoming an endangered species. . . ."

Taken from: "Voting Early, but Not So Often"
by Barry C. Burden and Kenneth R. Mayer

Published: October 24, 2010 in *The New York Times*

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

Topic: Program Planning for 2011-2013

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 October 28, 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, Dec. 4

10 a.m. At-Large Unit and Briefing

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

Wednesday, Dec. 8

10 a.m. McLean (MCL)

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

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

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

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

Burke Centre Library
5935 Freds Oak Rd.
Burke Centre 22015
Contact: Lois, 703-690-0908

12 noon Chantilly/Centreville (CC)

Sully District Gov. Center.
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.
Centreville 20151
Contact: Susan, 703-391-0666

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, Dec. 9

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

11624 Sourwood Lane
Reston 20191
Contact: Margo, 703-620-9024

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

9424 Hermitage Dr.
Springfield 22152
Nancy Miller, 703-256-6570

9:30 a.m. Fairfax City Day (FXD)

4929 Gainsborough Drive
Fairfax 22032
Contact: Joan, 703-978-8715

11:30 a.m. Vienna Evening (VE)

Oakton Regional Library
10304 Lynnhaven Place
Oakton 22124
Contact: Anne, 703-938-7304

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

Monday, Dec.13

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

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

January Meeting:

Domestic Violence (No unit meetings)



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

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Time Sensitive Materials

The LWVFA *Fairfax VOTER* ©
December, 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