



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

Fairfax VOTER

April 2010

Volume 62, Issue 8

Annual Meeting Offers Something for Everyone

A is for April and for Annual Meeting, a great time to demonstrate your commitment to the League process. Some of the many opportunities:

- catch up with League friends, especially the ones not in your unit
- approve the proposed program items, or add some of your own
- approve the proposed budget for next year or suggest changes in priority
- approve proposed by-laws changes or revise them
- find out what went on behind the scenes at the just-completed Va. General Assembly Session
- enjoy a delicious lunch somewhere other than in your own kitchen

How can you resist? Registration form inside (see page 5).

Calendar

March (Women's History Month)

- 29 Palm Sunday
- 29 Passover (*begins at sunset*)
- 29-4/2 FCPS spring vacation
- 30-4/1 BOS public hearings on FY11 Budget

April No Units – LWVFA Annual Meeting

- 01 BOS public hearing on FY11 Budget
- 02 May *Fairfax VOTER* deadline
- 02 NCA Board Meeting
- 05 *Last day to register for City/Town Elections*
- 04 Easter
- 19-23 LWV Voters Guide (spring 2010) on website
- 21 **Board Meeting** - UC letter deadline
- 24 **LWVFA Annual Meeting (62nd)**
Mason District Government Center 10 a.m.

May

- 01 Law Day
- 01 **LWV-VA Council** in Lynchburg
- 03 June *Fairfax VOTER* deadline
- 04 City and Town elections

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***Invite a Friend to
Your Next Unit
Meeting!***



The President's Message

Thank you so much for your response to my plea of last month. We are so close to having a full slate of nominees for officers, directors and other positions, just missing Voters Service Outreach and an assistant to Una White with community elections. And they may be filled by the time you are reading this. **Gail Richmond** and her committee—**Rona Ackerman, Viveka Fuenzalida and Gloria Hahe**—have done an excellent job as Nominating Chair and committee. New people with new ideas are more than welcome on the board—we need them! I am excited to work with these people and plan on expanding our core services and events as well as starting some new “standard events” that will help our community and also attract new members.

The more people we have working on making the League more responsive, the less responsibility each person has. And the enjoyment of working with people toward a common goal is invigorating. The way our government is working today(?), more reasoned, nonpartisan voices are needed. And that's us—the League. So, get involved. The more we are involved, the better government we have. There is nothing in nature that blossoms with neglect.

Thank you for all you do for the League.

Janey

Who Was Francis Silver . . . ?

Former League Member Recognizes the LWVFA in Will

By Sherry Zachry

As many of us in the Fairfax Area League learned recently, we have a generous benefactor named Frances Silver who included a legacy to LWVFA in her will. Who was Frances Silver? Here is what we have found out from the folks who knew Frances and attended League meetings with her.

Frances Silver was a quiet member of the Springfield Unit who attended many League functions but never held a leadership position in the League. Frances was dedicated to her husband Louis, who preceded her in death. Together, they were very active in partisan politics. They had no

children. Frances died in January 2005 and graveside services were held in early February.

Shortly after her death the LWVFA office was notified by letter that the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area was named as a beneficiary in her estate. The estate's probate was completed in late 2009 and the LWVFA received the first of two installments.

The LWVFA will be good stewards of Frances Silver's legacy, using it in coming years to augment its activities to keep our members and the community informed about issues of importance and to further the good government principles that are the heart of the League of Women Voters. Frances was a typical League member; yet, she believed so much in what LWV stands for and does that she chose to leave a substantial gift, which will benefit us for years to come. THANK YOU Frances; we wish we had known you better!

Have You Written the LWVFA into Your Will?

Think about leaving your legacy to the women who follow.

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2009 - 2010

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

Action Faction . . .

Board of Supervisors Increases Property Tax Rate - Public Hearing Scheduled

By Jane Hilder, Action Director

On March 9, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to advertise a property tax rate of 1.12 per \$100 of assessed valuation. If that rate is adopted, it will be 8 cents per \$100 higher than the rate levied in 2009. The LWVFA Board sent a letter in support of this action. Thanks to all members who contacted their supervisors on this issue. County Executive Tony Griffin based his proposed budget on a tax rate of 1.09, but he had recommended that the BOS advertise a rate of 1.12 to have the flexibility to restore some of the cuts he had made when crafting the budget.

The main problem this year is that county revenues have dropped in every area, but needs have increased. Declines in residential property assessments average 5.56 percent this year, not as steep as last year's, and Griffin noted that property values in many communities have leveled off. But commercial property valuations have dropped drastically by an average of 18.29 percent. County income from sales tax, personal property tax, and federal and state funding have declined, pushing more of the county funding burden onto residential property. Even a tax rate of 1.12, if approved, will mean substantial cuts in services.

The budget Griffin proposed at 1.09 would mean the average county homeowner would pay slightly less property tax than last year. It would mean a loss of about 300 county jobs, many of which are currently not filled due to concern about the impending budget crisis. It also proposes to freeze county staff salaries for the second year in a row. It would make cuts in park and library hours and services, and service reductions through the Community Services Board, which supplies mental health and substance abuse treatment and other human services in the county. There would be cuts in public safety services and reduced overtime. And, there would be cuts in numerous public school programs.

Eight of the ten supervisors voted to advertise the higher tax rate of 1.12, with Cook and Herrity voting against. That does not mean the majority will eventually vote to implement the 1.12 rate. It does leave the option open during the county budget hearings on April 6-8 and Board deliberations culminating in approval of the final budget on April 27. Supervisors Cook and Herrity felt that a recession was no time to be raising taxes, while Supervisor Hyland noted that under the 1.09 rate proposal, the current policy of assigning

a police officer to every middle school would end. This has been part of the combined approach that is credited with helping reduce gang recruitment and violence. He also noted that emergency psychiatric services in north and south county would be terminated, forcing those in crisis to travel to the Woodburn Center to receive help. Hyland considers those cuts unacceptable and noted he has constituents requesting a tax hike to 1.22.

The stormwater district tax, which began as a penny on the tax rate, is now dedicated to a separate fund for addressing stormwater runoff issues in the county. That would add 1½ cents to the tax rate. Frey and Herrity opposed advertising this tax, but other supervisors noted that it is going to be required under Chesapeake Bay regulations.

The Supervisors also voted to consider reinstating a local vehicle licensing fee that would be collected with personal property tax. Longtime residents will recognize this as the county "decal fee" but without the decal. Evidently residents resented removing the old decal each year more than paying the tax, since many residents suggested reinstating it. It would levy charges of up to \$33 per passenger vehicle and \$38 for a vehicle heavier than 4,000 lbs. This fee was abolished with the annual decal in 2006, but it is one of the ways the state allows localities to diversify the revenue base. Supervisors Frey, Cook and Herrity voted against considering the vehicle fee. The Board also voted to hold a public hearing on adopting courthouse facilities fees for civil cases. These are currently assessed only in criminal cases.

None of these taxes and fees has been finalized yet. Public hearings will be held to solicit citizen input on all of them. LWVFA will testify on Thursday, April 8. Any member who wants to testify as an individual can contact the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors.

LWVDC Plans Cookbook

The LWVDC is preparing a recipe book in conjunction with the 90th birthday of the National League and our Chapter. The book will be edited by Goody Braun, whose byline, Goody Solomon, has appeared on food and nutrition articles in the local and national press for many years.

For more information contact Goody Braun at 1712 Taylor St., Washington, DC 20011 or goody.solomon@verizon.net.

Speaker for Annual Meeting Will Report on Recent VA Legislative Session

The speaker for LWVFA's Annual Meeting is Anita Kumar, staff writer for the *Washington Post* who focuses on Virginia government. After spending many hours in Richmond in the past few months, Ms. Kumar has agreed to share some of her observations of and insights into the achievements of the Virginia General Assembly as its two-month session draws to a close.



Ms. Kumar has covered Virginia politics and government in the Richmond bureau of the *Washington Post* since 2007. She covered the U.S. Senate race in 2008, the gubernatorial race in 2009 and three regular legislative sessions and Govs. Tim Kaine and Bob McDonnell.

A native Virginian, she grew up in Charlottesville and attended the University of Virginia (1992 graduate). She spent a decade at the *St. Petersburg Times* in Florida, covering local, state and federal government and politics, including U.S. Senate races in 2004 and 2006. Prior to that, she worked or interned briefly at three small Virginia newspapers - the *Daily Progress* in Charlottesville, the *Star-Exponent* in Culpeper and the *News & Advance* in Lynchburg—and the *News & Record* in Greensboro, N.C.

She has served on panels and helped with debates for LWVFA in the past.

Workers Needed to Monitor Community Elections

As the snow is finally melting, the usual community elections for springtime are beginning to be scheduled, and the LWVFA is being asked to assist. So far, there are two planned for May. The Prince William League election for Four Seasons at Historic Virginia has been rescheduled for Monday, May 10. We have been helping them with the particulars and they have agreed to share a few dollars with us if we can supply a few registrars and vote counters.

The McLean Community Center has contacted us for assistance again this May. They are planning to have the McLean Day celebration on Saturday, May 15, and want to have the voting booth open all day again as last year, from 10:30 to 5:00; volunteers are needed to count votes at the center afterward, as well.

We have also heard from the Skyline Plaza Condominium at Baileys Crossroads inquiring about their June election. The details have not yet been worked out, but they usually have their election the second Wednesday in June. So please mark your calendar and plan to volunteer.

If you are able to help with any of these, please give Una White a call or send an email (703-922-8721, unawhite@gmail.com). These elections contribute a large portion of our discretionary income and take only a few hours of your time.

Latest on “Penny for Affordable Housing” Program

LWVFA members may be asking what happened to the “penny for affordable housing.” That penny was reduced to about half a penny in 2009. Now, with a shrinking tax base, even a full penny does not bring in as much tax revenue. In the county executive’s budget, about \$4 million would be available for implementing the “Blueprint for Affordable Housing.” \$6 million of that penny fund is already committed to debt service on bonds for earlier housing projects.

On January 26, the BOS adopted the “Blueprint for Affordable Housing” that was drafted by the Board’s housing committee, chaired by Supervisor Hudgins. Chairman Bulova stated that this plan signals a change in emphasis from purchasing workforce housing units in danger of being sold and converted to market rate housing to an emphasis on ending homelessness in 10 years. This plan would require \$10 million in 2011 for implementation, primarily in the form of rent subsidies.

The BOS set housing priorities at their retreat that placed prevention of homelessness at the top and workforce housing as the lowest priority. The Board voted to accept the blueprint, but implementation would depend on availability of funding at budget adoption. The priorities in order are ending homelessness within a decade, affordable housing for the disabled and seniors, reducing the waiting lists for affordable housing, and expanding affordable housing options for entry-level middle-income public-sector workers.



~ You are cordially invited to attend ~



The LWV of the Fairfax Area
Annual Meeting

on

Saturday, April 24, 2010

at

MASON DISTRICT GOVERNMENTAL CENTER
 6507 Columbia Pike
 Annandale, VA 22003

Directions: From 495, east 236, left Columbia Pike to 6507 on right

10 a.m. Registration & coffee; business meeting 10:20 a.m.

12 p.m. Buffet; conclusion of business meeting 2:30 p.m.

12:15 p.m.

**"Virginia's General Assembly Session 2010:
 The Inside Story"**

Anita Kumar, the *Washington Post*

(Reservations required for buffet)

Deadline April 14, 2009--Cost: \$20 per person

Menu: Mini croissant sandwiches w/chicken salad, egg salad, tuna salad, chicken tarragon, turkey, roast beef; fruit skewers with strawberry yogurt dip; bowtie pasta w/pine nuts; Greek salad w/feta cheese & balsamic dressing; mini French pastries; and coffee service

Program is free; luncheon, \$20 per person.

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

2010 Annual Meeting, 7606 Wood Mist Lane, Falls Church, VA 22043

Name _____ Lunch @\$20 ea. _____

Phone number & E-mail _____

Guest(s) name(s) _____ Lunch @\$20ea. _____

Total \$ enclosed _____

For special dietary needs or questions, call Tin Tai at 703-207-4669

In the Spotlight . . .

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series honoring Leaguers with over 50 years service.



Anne Andrews - Joined in 1956

Anne Andrews joined the League of Women Voters of Fairfax County in 1957 in the North Springfield unit. She joined because her beloved grandmother had been a member of the New York City League -- she may, in fact, have been a charter member of the LWVUS. Anne remembers that she used to go to the League office and address envelopes (she died in 1954). In 1956, Anne and her husband bought their first house, in North Springfield, and she resigned from her job at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare about a week before her first child was born in February 1957. She was then free to do things like the League.

Anne's first League board job was as chair of the Local Government committee. Later she edited the monthly newsletter and served as vice president for Program. In 1960, she moved to Mount Vernon and transferred to the Mount Vernon Day unit. She was working more than 20 hours a week for the League; but after acquiring two more children, in about 1966 she stopped taking League board jobs, to her husband's great relief. She continued attending Mt. Vernon Day unit meetings regularly until she went back to paid work for the federal government in 1972, and then she attended when she could.

Anne believes the skills she learned from the League, especially leading discussions and obtaining consensus, have been the basis of her success in all the volunteer activities she has undertaken-- such as founding and being the Convener of the Route One Task Force for Human Services (shortly to be 35 years old!); being a charter member of the Fairfax County Commission on Aging; serving on the Project Selection Committee, the Health Care Advisory Board, and other County boards; serving as Treasurer of the Advisory Board to the Mount Vernon Center for Community Mental Health and on the Community Advisory Committee to the Fairfax County Health Care Network; and, most recently, joining the board of the Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services Inc.

She is very proud to have been selected as 2008 Citizen

of the Year by the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations; she received the award in March 2009.



Marilyn Hedges - Joined in 1954

A Baltimorean who relocated to Northern Virginia with her marriage to Harold, Marilyn Hedges joined the Fairfax League in 1954, after the first of their three children was born. She believes LWV was a salvation to women of that generation, especially college graduates needing a place to focus intellectually. As a history major, she had been aware of the failure of citizens to exercise their franchise. She has always held a unit office, and her LWV interests have primarily been as membership director and unit membership chair. She sees the League as encouraging "rolling admission." Whenever you enter, the welcome mat is out.

Her career choices have included editor and photographer of the employee magazine in a large industrial complex, advertising agency proofreader and time buyer, graduate-school program secretary and student adviser, elementary school teacher, and executive secretary of a professional organization. Marilyn earned her Master's of Science degree from Virginia Tech at the age of 67.

Marilyn's husband died in 2008, and her daughter, who is medically disabled, remains with her in Clifton. Both sons are in the information technology industry, one in Oregon, the other in Iowa.

Outside activities have been limited except for directing the senior citizens group at her church. Marilyn wishes to express appreciation to the Fairfax Station Leaguers who have been so supportive during these difficult times.



Shirley Olsen - Joined in 1955

Shirley Reese Olson was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, but grew up in Larchmont, N.Y. She graduated from Connecticut College for Women, Phi Beta Kappa, with a psychology degree and earned an M.A. at Lehigh, where she met her husband. She joined the Broome County, N.Y., League in 1955, when she

was pregnant with her first son and has never regretted it. During 11 years there, she was board secretary, membership chair, unit chair and served on several study committees.

Between 1960 and 1967, Shirley and Merritt moved six times. Shirley was a League member in Omaha, in Malibu, Calif., and for three years in Newport News, Va., before moving to Reston and the Fairfax Area LWV where, they have lived for 42 years. She says, "The joy of the LWV membership was that by joining a local LWV you meet people with similar interests whether in the north, midwest, far west or south (we sampled them all) and make new friends. You can become part of the community right away if you desire." In Hampton-Newport News, she was first vice president, secretary and program chair, and chaired a study committee on China and the "Great Leap Forward."

She moved to Reston in 1967, population 2000, and became close friends with Janet Hays and Carolyn Lindberg who had started the Reston Day Unit. Shirley has been unit chair, unit membership chair, Fairfax Area co-program chair, and a member of many study committees. She was the Fairfax Area NCA-LWV liaison and served as NCA recording secretary, where she enjoyed working with Leaguers from a wider area.

As the first education chair of the Reston Community Association, she worked for bond passage for the construction of Hunters Woods Elementary and South Lakes High Schools. She also belonged to the Homeowners Association recreation committee and the Georgetown Hospital Committee, forerunner of the Reston Hospital. She was a member of the Fairfax County Goals Planning Committee in 1971, and a charter member of the Reston Garden Club.

Shirley has worked at the Reston Reading Center, as assistant registrar for the Reston branch of Virginia Tech, and for Jansons Associates Architects, later known as Stanmyre and Noel Architects. She was hired, due to her LWV background, by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to get all the eligible students in the country registered to vote in the 1988 election. After retirement, she became active in F.I.S.H. Inc. (Friendly, Instant, Sympathetic Help), serving as president for four years. Wanting a creative outlet, she studied watercolor painting under Lassie Corbett, joining her over the years on art trips to Ireland, Hawaii, Peru, Greece, Tuscany and Provence. She mounted a retrospective art exhibit this past September at the Reston Community Center. She and her husband have three grown sons and four grandchildren.

Restorative Justice in Education Policy Summit
MT. VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH
11220 Nuckols Road, Glen Allen, VA 23059

Monday, May 3, 2010 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(General Admission is \$49.00).

FEATURED PRESENTER - KAY PRANIS

Kay Pranis is nationally known for her work in the field of restorative justice, providing training and technical assistance to national and local initiatives with a special emphasis on the use of peacemaking circles. She has been involved in the development of circle processes in schools, criminal justice, neighborhoods, families and the workplace. She is a co-author of the book *Peacemaking Circles: From Crime to Community* and author of the *Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*.

Ed. Note: As the LWV-VA studied and developed a position on Restorative Justice, our league has been invited to participate in this event.

May Unit Meetings: State Election Laws



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Time Sensitive Materials

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April 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 \$34.50 ____; (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** _____

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

Thank you for checking off your interests:

<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	