



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF THE FAIRFAX AREA

# Fairfax VOTER

May 2012

Volume 64, Issue 9

## Domestic Violence Study (Part 2): Changes in Programs and Practices

Interesting fact: Approximately half of all Fairfax County homicides are related to domestic violence. All the more reason to be grateful to our hard-working Domestic Violence Committee for researching some of the many ways that both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence in Fairfax County can receive the help they need. Don't be discouraged by the alphabet soup of agencies that have been set up to help; the report explains them all. This would be a good study to keep on hand in case you learn of someone in need of help because negotiating these agencies would be challenging to someone caught in a frightening situation. Enjoy the discussion. The committee will add insights as to a likely starting place to finding just the right agency.

### Calendar

#### May

- 1 Virginia city/town elections
- 4 NCA Board meeting
- 5 NCA Convention
- Briefing/At Large meeting**
- 7 June *VOTER* deadline
- 8-14 Unit Meetings**
- 11 LWV-VA Board meeting
- 12 LWV-VA Council
- 13 Mother's Day
- 16 LWVFA Board meeting**
- 19 McLean Community Center election
- 21 Last day to register for primary
- 28 Memorial Day

### Inside This Issue

- |                                     |        |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Presidents' Message                 | 2      |
| Waiting For Obama to Respond        | 2      |
| LWVUS Convention Volunteer          |        |
| Signup                              | 3      |
| Units Agree: Privatization Requires |        |
| Oversight                           | 4      |
| Convention Speaker Announced        | 4      |
| Fairfax DOT Announces               |        |
| Transit Study                       | 5      |
| Domestic Violence Study –           |        |
| Part 2                              | EF-1-6 |
| LWVUS New Position on Education     | 5      |
| Latest Info on Photo ID Laws        | 5      |
| George Testifies on 2013 Budget     | 6      |
| LWVFA Takes Exception               |        |
| to Health Care Bill                 | 6      |
| Fundraiser at Dogfish Head          |        |
| Ale House                           | 7      |
| Statement to School Board           | 7      |
| Unit Meeting Locations              | 8      |



## Presidents' Message



Big congratulations to the nominating committee for such an excellent slate of officers and Board directors. This coming year's officers/Board members will be a very strong Board, with both "new" and "old" – the very best for new ideas along with League knowledge making sure everything is done "the League way."

LWVFA has continued in "dividing" up the Board portfolios so that more can do less with great success. Being more involved is keeping LWVFA active and relevant now and in the future. We still have some jobs to fill – our Voters' Guide needs more than one person working on it; Action really needs two people – one for local and one for state (who can take turns going to Board meetings). Think about it over the summer – I know that's still a month away – but maybe the excitement of the coming election will help make being more active in LWVFA more interesting.

I want to call your attention to the request for volunteers on the following page. We are fortunate that the LWVUS national convention is being held here in Washington, DC on June 8-12 at the Washington Hilton. The committee has worked very hard to put this event together and needs volunteers to help keep thing running smoothly. Let's do our part by volunteering to make this convention a memorable one for all those who attend. Take a minute and see where you might fit in and then let Diane Hibino know of your willingness to help.

Thanks for all you do,

*Janey*



**MAKING  
DEMOCRACY WORK**

# Waiting for President Obama's Answer to FEC Petition

By Elisabeth MacNamara, President LWVUS

It was just about a month ago that the League and partner organizations successfully petitioned The White House to appoint new commissioners to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). Our petition argued that the FEC is supposed to be the agency that enforces campaign finance laws, but it is dysfunctional. Of the six commissioners at the agency, three of them staunchly refuse to enforce the law, and five of the six are serving despite expired terms. On April 11, we again wrote to President Obama, asking for a response.

It is time for the President to step up to the challenge, just as he promised he would in his campaign four years ago. Right now, this ball is in the President's court. He needs to make nominations to the FEC. We eagerly await the response from President Obama to our petition and about his plans for the government agency charged with enforcing the law and stopping illegal coordination by candidate Super PACs.

## LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2011 - 2012

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

## **Be a LWVUS National Convention Volunteer, June 8 -12**

And you will have a FREE ticket to the fundraiser for the LWNCA,

### **♪ The Capitol Steps ♪ Musical Political Satire**

Saturday, June 9, at the Hilton Washington Hotel

We are looking for volunteers for the 2012 convention to be held at the Hilton Washington Hotel, 1919 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C. Volunteers are needed for many different types of jobs, some behind the scenes and some on the floor of the convention. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of an exciting League function. It's work, but it's a lot of fun too.

#### **Volunteers are needed as follows:**

##### **Every day (June 8 – 12)**

Registration—staff registration desk; distribute badges and materials

Credentials—certify voting eligibility of delegates; prepare official daily attendance report

Information—staff information desk; provide local tourist information to delegates and visitors

Personnel—staff volunteer room; assist with assignments; provide back-up to other volunteer areas

Teller/Elections—process vote cards; count and record results

##### **Friday through Sunday (June 8-10)**

Hospitality—greet delegates and guests; host hospitality suite; assist with information

Dine Around—staff dine around desk—sign-ups, reservations, information

##### **Saturday through Tuesday (June 9-12)**

##### **Floor Committee:**

Doorkeeper—check badges for eligibility to enter; distribute official materials; monitor doors.

Usher—distribute, collect, deliver motion slips; collect vote cards; usher guests.

Microphone Monitor—monitor floor mikes; keep order in lines; assist with vote counts.

Timekeeper—notify speakers when time has expired

Questions? Contact Diane Hibino trihib@verizon.net 301-263-9876 or

Anne Kanter akanter@cox.net 703-448-6626

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Detach and return form to We'll contact you soon.

**Diane Hibino, 5051 Waukesha Rd., Bethesda MD 20816**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ League \_\_\_\_\_

Area(s) of Interest: (please mark in order of your preferences – 1, 2, 3, etc.)

Floor Committee: Doorkeepers \_\_\_\_\_ Ushers \_\_\_\_\_ Timekeepers \_\_\_\_\_ Microphone Monitors \_\_\_\_\_

Other: Registration \_\_\_\_\_ Credentials \_\_\_\_\_ Information \_\_\_\_\_ Personnel \_\_\_\_\_ Teller/Elections \_\_\_\_\_  
Dine Around \_\_\_\_\_ Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_ Whatever else you need \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: Please choose times and days you are available to work and indicate AM, PM or all day. The number of hours you will be asked to work will depend on the number of volunteers and their areas of interest.

Friday, June 8 (PM and/or Eve) \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, June 9 \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday, June 10 \_\_\_\_\_  
Monday, June 11 \_\_\_\_\_ Tuesday, June 12 (AM only) \_\_\_\_\_

If you are willing to work more than one day, please indicate here \_\_\_\_\_.

# Units Agree That Privatization Requires Oversight

By Karole McKalip with Lois Page

Regarding March's program, a national consensus on "privatization," several units felt overwhelmed by the extent of information in the study and on the website as well as by the number of consensus questions. "We weren't sure how the excerpts were chosen" was a representative comment.

Some felt that the study appeared to be slanted or biased in the direction that all privatization is bad. "The examples presented in the study did not support privatization." Some commented that it was "very important to look at what function is being privatized and what the long term results would be." Some felt that states were jumping on board too quickly, looking for quick results to current budget problems without thinking of the longer term.

Most groups did not reach consensus on the first question (i.e., the extent to which government functions, services and assets have been privatized in the past decade). Several units remarked that there was not enough information to make a decision and there were no statistics provided to make an analysis. How much privatization has there been nationally?

On the second question (whether or not core government services should remain with the government), almost a quarter of the members could not reach a consensus. One group had trouble agreeing on the definition of a "core governmental service." Others wanted to know how outsourcing and privatization are different.

One group would like to see a cost benefit analysis before deciding absolutely that privatization is not appropriate. On

the question of evidence of potential corruption, another group noted that both government and private entities could be corrupt.

Regarding some parts in questions 3 (on criteria for deciding to move to privatize) and 4 (when privatizing is not appropriate), several units said "don't understand the question; makes no sense; not clear; not appropriate." Several groups felt that answering question 4 and its parts was difficult because of unclear meanings. Some stated that "agree" was the only appropriate answer to all parts, and others said "no consensus" because several parts were confusing and could not be answered.

Question 6 (on what should be included in a regulatory process) was similarly evaluated. For some units "strongly agree" seemed the only reasonable answers to A through I. Several others reached "no consensus." Several groups hesitated to endorse the question about displaced employees because they were unsure about the meaning of "transition plans."

Despite these misgivings, the overall reaction of the membership (at least 75 %) was that privatization must be done very carefully with many opportunities for oversight in place. The people who found it confusing or lacking in support appear to be about 25% or fewer of the membership. It should be noted that only part of the material on the LWVUS website was able to be included in the Voter. People needed to spend considerable time reading the website material to get the full picture of this very large study.



## National Convention Speaker Announced

LWVUS is very pleased to announce that Eleanor Clift, a regular contributor on the nationally syndicated show The McLaughlin Group, will be a panelist on Monday, June 11, at this year's National Convention! With so many forces that foster division in our democracy, such as the media, money and "winner-take-all politics," this panel will focus on what the League, in partnership with others in our communities, can do to unite people and advance solutions. Eleanor Clift is a political reporter and author, who is currently a contributing editor for *Newsweek* magazine. Come to National Convention to hear this session and many other exciting guest speakers!



# Domestic Violence Update (Part 2): Changes in Programs and Practices

Committee Members: Barbara Nunes (chair), Judy Helein, Sheila Iskra, and Inta Sraders

This is Part Two of an information update of the Domestic Violence study prepared by The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA). Part One was presented in February 2012 and looked at changes in policy at national and state levels and focused on programs and practices in the field of domestic violence in Fairfax County. Part Two covers local programs and services in Fairfax County. A previous update on domestic violence was prepared by LWVFA in 2002.

## Definition of Domestic Violence

Virginia law defines “family abuse” as *“any act involving violence, force, or threat that results in bodily injury or places one in reasonable apprehension of death, sexual assault, or bodily injury and that is committed by a person against such person’s family or household member. Such act includes, but is not limited to, any forceful detention, stalking, criminal sexual assault in violation of Article 7 (§18.2-61 et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, or any criminal offense that results in bodily injury or places one in reasonable apprehension of death, sexual assault, or bodily injury.”*

A wider, more holistic definition is used by the Fairfax County Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (OFWDSVS) and other groups: *In domestic or family violence, one person attempts to control or hurt another through actions or threats that can include physical, sexual, verbal, or psychological abuse. People of all ages, income levels, faiths, sexual orientation, gender, and education levels can experience domestic or family violence.*

## Changes in Fairfax County Programs and Practices

### *Domestic Violence Prevention, Policy, and Coordinating Council (DVPPCC)*

In 2003 the chair of Network Against Family Abuse (NAFA), a group comprised of staff from local nonprofits and county programs, petitioned the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) to establish the DVPPCC to provide high-level support and vision for the development of integrated, collaborative initiatives addressing domestic violence issues in Fairfax County.

DVPPCC was charged with advising the BOS on a range of policy, legislation, and program issues. Among them were:

- To develop a shared mission, vision, and goals for a coordinated community response in Fairfax County to domestic violence issues and needs;

- To evaluate and monitor the quality and effectiveness of domestic violence services in the community;
- To evaluate and monitor the quality of the criminal justice system in response to domestic violence;
- To develop a strategic plan focusing on core issues of family violence that is consistent with the Code of Virginia and best practices in the field;
- To promote knowledge of domestic violence laws; and
- To encourage greater knowledge of domestic violence resources and issues.

The original group consisted of the Chief Judge of Circuit Court; Chief Judge of General District Court; Chief Judge of Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (J&DRDC); Commonwealth’s Attorney; Sheriff; Chief Magistrate; Public Defender; County Executive; County Attorney; Chief of Police; Fire Chief; Director, J&DRDC Services; Director, Department of Family Services; Executive Director, Fairfax/Falls Church Community Services Board; Superintendent of Public Schools; Director, Office for Women; representatives from Inova, the Commission for Women, Legal Services, and LWVFA; and three members of NAFA. Since then other organizations have been added to the council.

The council brings together decisionmakers to provide a coordinated community response to domestic violence in Fairfax County. Meeting quarterly, the DVPPCC receives and shares information and insights. With the appointment of a new domestic violence coordinator in March 2012, the DVPPCC will begin a strategic planning process that will help better define and focus the group to utilize their knowledge and understanding of community resources and institutions.

### *Programs with DVPPCC Agreements*

Participants from various county agencies have attended DVPPCC-sponsored training and seminars across the county. The DVPPCC also supported the development of the Fatality Review Team, which reviews all domestic violence-related deaths to identify system gaps and make policy recommendations. A Fairfax County Workplace Violence Policy was implemented in February 2012. Safe Havens, a visitation program for families affected by domestic violence, is scheduled to open soon. In addition, the Stronger Together supervised visitation center already is operating in the Historic Courthouse. Perhaps the most ambitious projects approved by the DVPPCC is the establishment of the new Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC).

## Programs at the Historic Courthouse

### *Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC)*

In October 2010 Fairfax County received a two-year \$800,000 Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women grant to support the operation of the Fairfax County DVAC. DVAC is a comprehensive, co-located service center, staffed by county agency and community nonprofit partners, created to provide culturally responsive information and support services for victims of domestic violence and stalking and their families, as well as to promote the accountability of offenders of these crimes through specialized prosecution and offender supervision.

DVAC is located on the second floor of the Historic Courthouse, near the new courthouse. DVAC is staffed by advocates who will assist survivors with navigating the justice system, obtaining available services, such as housing or counseling services, and assisting with other survivor needs. DVAC also promotes offender accountability through its support of two specialized domestic violence prosecutors and a probation officer who assists parties in making sure they have access to the court for compliance issues.

- OFWDSVS will assume project and grant leadership through the in-kind provision of the county-wide domestic violence coordinator. OFWDSVS provides a court specialist for 30 hours a week of in-kind services and a full-time administrative assistant funded under the grant.
- The grant funds two full-time domestic violence specialized prosecutors, both of whom are bilingual, in the office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.
- The grant funds one full-time probation counselor who monitors offenders' compliance with conditions of civil protective orders.
- The Victim Services Section of the Police Department will provide in-kind support for a victim services specialist at least two days a week at DVAC, as well as one or more social work students.
- The grant funds The Women's Center to employ two full-time community victim advocates.

DVAC clients will be referred by the Police Department, J&DRDC, Department of Family Services, OFWDSVS, or any other county or community nonprofit agency. Walk-ins also will be accepted from the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. Offenders, though not eligible for walk-in service, will be referred to appropriate services.

### *Safe Havens*

Safe Havens is funded by a Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Metropolitan Initiative Demonstration Grant of

\$400,000, which is separate from the DVAC grant. Fairfax County was invited by the Violence Against Women (VAW) Office in the Justice Department to establish the program in coordination with Prince George's County and the District of Columbia. Safe Havens is an exchange and visitation program under the VAW Office initiative of the same name and is scheduled to open soon. Under this program, the non-custodial parent can have visitation with children at the center or be able to take the child out. The program will deal with families experiencing domestic violence, sexual abuse, or stalking. Staff also will work with fathers to increase safety of victims and to model appropriate parenting skills.

The center will be open Mondays and Thursdays from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Clients will be referred by the courts or community agencies, or will be self referred. For clients to use the visitation or exchange services at Safe Havens, both parents must agree to arrangements. Due to space constraints, the program will not be able to accommodate more than two families at a time. The program has 1-1/2 staff positions now and expects to involve volunteers when operational.

### *Supervised Visitation Center or Stronger Together*

Established in 2009, this program serves 130 families a year. In May 2010, when the committee interviewed staff, they were serving 32 families. These families are court ordered into treatment by Juvenile Court Judges. The center, located on the first floor at the Historic Courthouse, is open on Monday and Tuesday evenings, and on Saturday. They see three to five families at one time. Staff interviews each parent separately and sets rules and guidelines. There are separate drop-off points for the children, with separate parking lots, and no contact is allowed between parents. Staff is present, along with volunteers, to monitor, but not interfere unless necessary. Visits are 90 minutes.

### Acronym List

ADAPT	Anger and Domestic Abuse Prevention and Treatment
BOS	Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
DVAC	Domestic Violence Action Center
DVPPCC	Domestic Violence Prevention, Policy, and Coordinating Council
I-CARE	Children and Adults Relating Empathically
J&DRDC	Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
LSNV	Legal Services Northern Virginia
NAFA	Network Against Family Abuse
OAR	Opportunities, Alternative, and Resources
OFWDSVS	Fairfax County Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services
VAN	Victim Assistance Network
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act

The center has two paid staff plus volunteers and security. There is some recidivism. Eighty-eight percent of clients had protective orders issued and most have some domestic violence incidents.

### **Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court (J&DRDC)**

One of the big differences from ten years ago is that the new courthouse building has been designed to provide more security and privacy. There are many conference rooms where pre-trial meetings can be held in private and litigants do not have to see the other party. By statute, children can testify remotely in abuse and neglect matters, provided the appropriate notices are served. It also can be done in other cases if all parties agree.

There are eight judges in J&DRDC. They have sufficient capacity to keep up with the docket. Because of state budget constraints, the court would not be able to get new judges even if needed. Judicial training is adequate. All judges attend state judicial training conferences. Domestic violence cases require about 60 percent of the judges' time. Custody and visitation cases have domestic violence issues.

The Court Services Unit is now pro-active. They bring the family in, make referrals, and wrap services around the family. This diverts cases from the court. Neglect and abuse dockets are down; domestic violence cases are up. Access to services is uneven; getting adequate services for foreign language speakers is difficult.

Interpretation for litigants has improved but there still are deficiencies. There are enough Spanish interpreters, but there is not a certification process through the Virginia Supreme Court for Vietnamese and Korean languages. Farsi and Arabic do not have certified interpreters. The problem is compounded by cultural issues. There are devices to help the hard of hearing. The immigration status of victims is not checked.

One concern is keeping addresses correct in court records. All cases may be appealed within ten days and if the address of the plaintiff or petitioner is incorrect, notice of the appeal may not be received and the case will be dismissed. To cover for this possibility, it has been suggested that victims go to the courthouse and give their change of address to both the J&DRDC and Circuit Court.

### **Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (OFWDSVS)**

Prior to July 2008, the Fairfax County Office for Women worked on policy issues affecting women and girls in the county, including issues relating to Title IX, girls in technology, and the glass ceiling. No direct services were

provided under the auspices of the Office for Women. In July 2008, the programs that comprised the Community Services Board's Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault (DASA) programs were moved into the Office for Women. Those programs were known as Victim Assistance Network (VAN), the Anger and Domestic Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) batterer intervention program, and The Women's Shelter, the crisis domestic violence shelter now known as Artemis House.

The agency was renamed the Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (OFWDSVS). The result was an agency that continues to support the Commission for Women and its work, continues to provide insight and guidance on county policy and program issues affecting families, and provides direct intervention, education, and prevention services around the issues of domestic and sexual violence. OFWDSVS is now the state-accredited domestic and sexual violence program for survivors and also continues to provide the ADAPT program, a state-certified batterer intervention program for perpetrators of domestic violence.

OFWDSVS receives most of its funding from the county. In addition, OFWDSVS receives two grants that include VAWA and Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding through the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. These grants fund two part-time sexual assault counselors, a part-time sexual assault outreach specialist, and a part-time bilingual counselor deployed to Artemis House. A grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services funds the ADA-designed (Americans with Disabilities Act) apartment at Artemis House. OFWDSVS also has responsibility for the management of the Department of Justice grant that established the Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC) mentioned above.

#### ***Hotline***

For many, the hotline (703-360-7273) serves as the first access to domestic violence services and support in the community. OFWDSVS maintains the 24-hour hotline for domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and trafficking issues. In FY 2011, more than 1,600 calls were placed to the hotline, which is answered by OFWDSVS staff and trained volunteers. A hotline at Artemis House receives approximately 1,400 additional calls per year from those seeking shelter and provides information on domestic violence services.

#### ***Counseling and Other Supportive Services***

OFWDSVS provides a wide variety of supportive services. A team of trained counselors provides eight to ten individual counseling sessions for domestic and sexual violence survivors, including children, teens, women, and men. The counseling team currently includes three Spanish speakers, with interpreters available for other languages as needed.



Groups offered include a coping skills group for female victims of sexual or domestic violence, a domestic violence support group, a group for children who have been affected by domestic violence, a group for men who were sexually assaulted as children, and a series named “Compassion Training for Couples in Conflict.” Two informational and support groups are offered in Spanish at the Franconia and Falls Church Family Resource Centers. OFWDSVS has a housing and economic specialist who works with clients to obtain housing, develop budgets, and learn other skills important to maintaining economic self-sufficiency. A court specialist supports clients through the legal and immigration processes. A children’s services coordinator plans and delivers programming of value to children affected by violence.

### ***Education and Outreach***

OFWDSVS provides hundreds of programs each year reaching thousands of people in the community. From prevention and safety programming in the schools, to outreach in the faith communities, to working collaboratively with community partners, OFWDSVS stands as a source of information, knowledge, and skill development. Any organization that would like their members to learn more about these issues and how they affect the community can call OFWDSVS to schedule a presentation.

### **Anger and Domestic Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT)**

ADAPT participants are taught to prevent abuse through the development of compassion for themselves and others. Based on the work of Stephen Stosny, the program teaches participants how to regulate anger and shame, take responsibility for behavior and feelings, let go of harmful blame, accept not being in control of another person or situation, develop safe and compassionate solutions to family conflicts, and assess the role of substances on thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

In 2002 ADAPT had three locations for the 18-week group counseling program. The ADAPT program now is offered in five locations. In addition to the existing programs at South County-Mount Vernon, Woodburn, and Chantilly, two new programs in Reston and Falls Church were started in October 2011. Men and women are accepted into the program; 25 percent of ADAPT participants are women.

Fees are charged for these programs. Regular county rates are \$150 for the intake fee and \$300 for the group counseling program. Out-of-county rates are \$200 and \$400, respectively. Financial hardship fees are \$50 for intake and \$100 for the group program; the reduced fee is offered for those who meet income guidelines. Most referrals come from the local courts, particularly J&DRDC. About 73 percent of the clients complete the group counseling program; about 85 percent of the participants are court ordered.

### **Commission for Women**

The Fairfax County Commission for Women was created by the BOS in 1971 to promote the equality of women and girls; to advise the BOS on the concerns of women and girls; to present possible solutions; and to effect long-term change through public education, policy reform, and building community partnerships. There are 12 members. Nine are appointed by members of the BOS, one from each magisterial district; two at-large members are appointed by the BOS Chairman; a student representative comes from a local college or university.

Two years ago, the Commission for Women initiated the development of a workplace domestic violence policy. The draft came to DVPPCC in November 2009 as a procedural document and was incorporated into the county’s revised Security Program in February 2012. This policy serves as a model for other businesses and organizations that are developing workplace domestic violence policies of their own.

### **Shelters**

Every effort is made to find housing for victims and their families that require shelter. If beds are not available in the traditional domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters are contacted: including Mondloch House, Shelter House, Embury Rucker Shelter, Eleanor U. Kennedy Shelter, Patrick Henry Family Shelter, Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter, or Bailey’s Crossroads Community Shelter.

**Artemis House**—OFWDSVS contracts with Shelter House, Inc., a local nonprofit, to manage Artemis House. Staff from OFWDSVS provide group and individual counseling to adults and children at Artemis House and are also responsible for training staff. Artemis House has seven apartments, each with two or three bedrooms, for a total of 34 beds. In FY 2011, Artemis House sheltered 284 people, including 154 children, 127 women, and three men.

Because emergency shelter bed space for victims of domestic violence is so limited—one bed for every 31,000 residents in the service area—153 families were turned away from or had delayed entry into Artemis House. For those who could not enter immediately, safety planning and risk management strategies were discussed. Clients are allowed to stay at Artemis House for 45 days, during which they receive services such as case management and counseling. Due to the difficulty in finding affordable housing, many families need to extend their stay.

**Bethany House**—A nonprofit established in 1979 as a transitional program with a mission to house and counsel victims of domestic violence. They have three homes in the Fairfax County area. Two of the homes are owned by



Bethany House. The third home is owned by a church, but managed by Bethany House. They have 25 beds available to victims of domestic violence. They also serve other Northern Virginia jurisdictions. Bethany House maintains shelters and transitional housing units in other jurisdictions, providing victims with the area's most comprehensive program of support services and follow-up care available anywhere. From June 2010 to July 2011, they received 478 household calls from their dedicated help-line. From those calls, they were able to offer shelter to 105 individuals and families (51 adults and 54 children).

**Safe Places**—A nonprofit within Christian Relief Services, Safe Places focuses on transitional shelters for individuals and families that meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of homeless. Participants stay an average of two years at their locations. There are 12 locations throughout Fairfax County, including 20 beds devoted to domestic violence victims. Safe Places offers housing and counseling services to help prepare individuals and families for independent living.

**Someplace Safe**—Emergency 24-hour hotel housing is operated by the Fairfax County Police Department, which received \$1,000 to fund the program.

### **Legal Services Northern Virginia (LSNV)**

LSNV and Potomac Legal Aid merged to provide better coordinated services to domestic violence clients. LSNV was a private nonprofit law firm with eight locations, four of which were in Fairfax County. Their staff of 30 lawyers joined with Potomac Legal Services, with a staff of about 15. Potomac Legal Services had been providing services for eight years.

The busiest area of practice for both firms has been family law and the top priority is domestic violence. In addition to protective orders, the firms provide services for the client's holistic needs, e.g., divorce, custody, housing, public benefits. Both organizations had two primary funders, and all agreed that better use could be made of limited resources by merging the organizations.

LSNV has a new program, Attorney for the Day, which helps train lawyers to obtain protective orders. However, a restriction imposed by federal funding sources precludes the representation of undocumented persons.

Currently LSNV has one attorney dedicated to domestic violence cases in Fairfax County and three others contributing a portion of their time. Two of Potomac's staff attorneys handle family law cases in Fairfax County for the combined program. The focus will be on client services, advocacy, and outreach.

### **Fatality Review Team**

With approximately half of all Fairfax County homicides being domestic violence related, the BOS unanimously established the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team in October 2007. The team is tasked with reviewing domestic violence-related fatalities to identify gaps in the system or community responses to victims or offenders of domestic violence, as well as to recommend future policy or systems changes.

The team is staffed by a county-wide domestic violence coordinator and chaired by Major Tom Ryan of the Fairfax County Police Department, and Jessica Greis Edwardson, an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney. The team is comprised of county and community-based victim services, criminal justice, law enforcement, prosecution, and mental health professionals.

Cases are reviewed only after they are 'closed' in the system, meaning that most possible criminal appeals have been resolved. All information in the meetings is confidential and all members sign confidentiality agreements before every case review. Reports from the review team describe overall statistics, trends, and patterns, but not identifiable cases.

### **Opportunities, Alternatives, and Resources (OAR)**

OAR of Fairfax County, Inc. is small nonprofit organization with programs for those referred by the court, under probation, or, in a few unusual cases, self referred. The mission is to rebuild the lives of offenders, some of whom are domestic violence offenders, and their families and break the cycle of crime to create a safer community. There is a \$50 intake fee and a charge of \$400 for the course. If the client is unable to pay, he or she may cover the cost through community service, which credits \$10 per hour. Funding is 80 percent user fees, and the rest comes from Fairfax County, state, and federal sources, and United Way contributions.

Last year 170 clients were enrolled; 116 completed the program and 85 were considered successful after taking the exit survey. The program measures pre- and post-program changes. The program serves only men and there are no Spanish-speaking groups.

### **The Women's Center**

The Women's Center is a private, nonprofit organization that provides personal and professional development services to residents in Northern Virginia. Since FY 1978, the BOS has contributed to this center to provide free or sliding-fee scale services to Fairfax County residents. Services include individual and group workshop sessions covering such areas as personal growth, divorce, separation, financial planning, and legal rights.

Located in Vienna, The Women's Center offers services to domestic violence victims. In FY 2012, the Center anticipates receiving approximately 50,000 requests for services to meet the interrelated psychological, practical, legal, and financial needs of county residents, many of whom are financially disadvantaged and require low-cost services. Access to these services enables residents to become self-sufficient and, ultimately, more productive community members.

The Women's Center has the I-CARE Program (Children and Adults Relating Empathically). I-CARE is a unique research-based program offered by The Women's Center that teaches parents and children about empathy to prevent or decrease future acts of violence in children. The program originally was funded through a grant from the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, but now is funded by Verizon. It is a ten-week program for families with at least one male child aged 9 to 13 years. There are separate components for child and parent. The parent session helps parents build on empathic parenting skills that help them understand and continue to reinforce the lessons at home. Research has shown that lack of empathy is related to violence, and children who have higher levels of empathy are at decreased risk of committing future acts of violence, especially if they exhibit certain risk factors, including exposure to violence.

Children have been referred to the program from area agencies and schools. It is primarily a first-come, first-serve program with eligibility requirements. There is pre- and post-measurement of the participants. Follow-up measurement would be desirable at the six-month and two-year milestones, but funding is not currently available. Teachers and parents are reporting positive changes in the children participating. There is Spanish-speaking staff and the Women's Center is considering offering the program in Spanish. One advocate speaks Spanish and there are therapists who also speak the language.

The Women's Center has sponsored workshops on domestic violence with various therapists and Judge Mann, Chief Judge, J&DRDC, explaining domestic violence and the legal process.

### **U-Visa: Immigration Status for Crime Victims**

In October 2000, Congress passed a law creating a new temporary status called the U-Visa for certain crime victims. If someone is in the United States without legal status, and has been the victim of a crime, she or he may be eligible for a temporary legal status and, eventually, lawful permanent resident status. Victims of certain crimes listed in the law are eligible for a U-Visa if:

- They have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of being a crime victim;
- They have information about the crime; and

- They are, have been, or will be helpful to legal authorities investigating or prosecuting the crime.

The law lists 26 separate crimes, including domestic violence, rape, abusive sexual contact, abduction, blackmail, and felony assault. A lawyer or legal services agency can help determine if someone was the victim of a crime included in the U-Visa law. Approved U-Visa applicants will receive three years of temporary legal status and work authorization. At the end of this period, most people with U-Visa status will be able to apply for lawful permanent resident status. The spouse and children of a U-Visa applicant, and the parent, if the U-Visa applicant is under age 16, may qualify for U-Visa status if they also meet other requirements in the law.

The rules for applying for a U-Visa have not been fully put into place, and there is no application form or final regulations. At this time, people who think they qualify for a U-Visa can apply for an interim form of temporary status called "deferred action," which also provides for permission to work. Once the procedures for applying for actual U-Visa status are issued, persons with deferred action status will be notified to submit an application.

### **Conclusion**

In addition to the many agencies and groups described in this report, many others are actively working in various ways to help stop domestic violence. There are support groups for victims in many locations in the county. These groups include: Ayuda (serving Spanish-speaking residents), Asian/Pacific American Legal Resource Center, Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project, Boat People (SOS), Christian Relief Services, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Foundation for Appropriate and Immediate Temporary Help (FAITH), George Mason University, Homestretch, Inova Fairfax Hospital, Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington, NOVACO, Northern Virginia Family Services, Tahireh Justice Center, and Time to Fly Foundation. In the past ten years Fairfax County has made many changes and continues educating and working to stop domestic violence.

### **Sources**

Andres Attali, Project Manager, Safe Places  
Sam Bachman, Director, ADAPT  
Sandy Bromley, OFWDSVS Liaison to the Commission for Women  
Ina Fernandez, Director, OFWDSVS  
Laura Harris, Director, J&DRDC Intake  
Kathy Hassinger, Executive Director, Bethany House  
Kathleen Kelmelis, Program Manager, OFWDSVS  
Meredith Kerley, The Women's Center  
Lori Kirkland, Coordinator, Stronger Together  
The Honorable Thomas P. Mann, Chief Judge, J&DRDC  
Jewel Mikula, Director, Shelter House  
Derwin Overton, Director, OAR of Fairfax County, Inc.  
Brittany Vira, Director, Safe Havens

## Fairfax County DOT Announces New Transit Study

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation has launched its 2050 Countywide Transit Network Study to determine the type of transit systems needed to accommodate desired economic growth throughout the county over the next several decades.

**The study will develop recommendations for where Metrorail should be extended, where streetcars, light-rail or other transit modes are appropriate, and where dedicated lanes that allow buses to move faster could be built.** The study will recommend transit improvements in various corridors that work together to improve/facilitate movement throughout the county, as well as how these transit modes can be phased-in and funded over time.

The study is commencing with an **online survey to gather public opinion** on current travel conditions within the county and what types of transit system expansion would be of greatest value to residents.

The survey results will help the county determine what types of transit expansion are most needed. To participate in the survey, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/2050transitstudy](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/2050transitstudy). There will be additional opportunities for public involvement throughout the duration of the study.

**The study is anticipated to take approximately 18 months, with an estimated completion of Summer 2013.**

*Reprinted from the April, 2012, Bulova Byline*

### Reminder:

*Volunteer to help at the National LWV Convention June 8-12 (See Page 3.)  
Let's all pitch in and do our part.*

## LWVUS Announces New Position on the Federal Role in Public Education

The LWVUS now has a [position on the Federal Role in Public Education](#)! The LWVUS Board approved a new Education position at its March 2012 meeting. The position is based on responses received from the 377 Leagues across the country that participated in the Education Study. The position states that “the League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right.”

Thanks to the many local and state Leagues and ILOs that held meetings, involved their communities, and worked to reach consensus on this critical issue of importance to all Americans. Committee Chairs Peggy Hill (TX) and Joanne Leavitt (CA) and their Committee: Pat Aaron (IL), Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins (CO), Patricia Libutti (NJ), Sanford Ostroy (MA), Jean Pierce (IL) and Janelle Rivers (SC) are to be commended for their excellent work and leadership.

## Latest Info on Photo ID Laws

**Elections: LWVSC Granted Permission to Intervene in Photo ID Lawsuit in Federal Court** On Tuesday, April 4, a three-judge panel in Washington, DC, granted permission to LWVSC and other groups to intervene in the photo ID case challenging the U.S. Department of Justice's denial of pre-clearance of the South Carolina's photo ID law. We are still waiting on the same court to decide if LWVTX can intervene in a similar lawsuit moving forward relating to the Texas photo ID and proof of citizenship bill. Learn more <http://www.wltx.com/news/article/182479/2/League-of-Women-Voters-NAACP-Allowed-into-Suit>.

**Elections: Minnesota's Voter ID Constitutional Amendment Likely on November Ballot** The Minnesota legislature passed a voter ID constitutional amendment that will likely be brought before the voters in this November's election. LWVMN was deeply involved in the fight to stop the ballot measure and is gearing up to help defeat it at the polls. Learn more <http://kstp.com/news/stories/s2567454.shtml>

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# President George Testifies to the BOS on the FY 2013 Advertised Budget

Good Evening, Chairman Bulova, and members of the Board of Supervisors. I am Janey George, Co-President of the League of Women Voters, speaking to you on behalf of our members and supporters in Fairfax County. I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

First of all, the League thanks you and the Management and Budget Office for making the online budget materials easier to locate and to use. This provides a wonderful resource for County residents.

The League supports the following increases in the FY 2013 Advertised Budget:

- **Office of Elections** – We were pleased to see increased funding for the 2012 Presidential election and for providing voting materials in Spanish. However, we are concerned that no funds are being set aside to cover the cost of the county's voting machines that must be replaced in the next few years.

We also have a specific request for a more immediate budget increase for either 2012 third quarter review or the 2012-13 budget: to add the \$200 thousand needed to provide new voter registration cards for all Fairfax County registered voters before the November 6<sup>th</sup> elections. After last year's redistricting, all registered voters received a new voter registration card. This year, due to a lack of funds, the Office of Elections plans to send new voter registration cards only to those registered voters in the 74 precincts affected by the new congressional district lines -- some 30 percent of the county precincts. We believe that this will cause voter confusion and result in many calls from those who expected but don't receive a card like persons in sometimes neighboring precincts in the same district. We also believe that the possible change in Virginia's voting identification requirements this year supports the need to provide all county registered voters with a card; it would be the only allowable identification that every registered voter will be sure to have or receive—free of charge.

- **Employee Pay Raise** – The League appreciates the high level of service County employees have continued to provide in the face of budget cuts. We believe the market rate adjustment is well deserved and are happy to see it. The League has long supported adequate salaries for those who provide services that make Fairfax County a quality place in which to live and work. We hope that meetings between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board will result in a method of adopting comparable pay and benefit levels for both county and school employees.
- **Transportation** – The League supports public transit, including funding for completion of the Silver Line to Dulles Airport, purchase of buses for the feeder routes to Metro stations, and, increased subsidies for VRE. We also support budget proposals to ensure that Tysons redevelopment proceeds as scheduled.
- **Storm Water Management Fees** – The League understands that efficient storm water management protects the property, health and safety of county residents. It also avoids unnecessary degradation of the environment and pollution of the Chesapeake Bay and the county's rivers and streams. This fee increase will also support our compliance with Federal and State regulations.

The League also urges you to consider budget increases in the following areas:

- **Public Libraries** – Reduced funding here disproportionately affects the county's most vulnerable residents. Library staff members report that students struggle to complete homework assignments while competing with other students and job seekers for limited time using the library's computers. Reduced funding has also shortened library hours and cut purchases of new materials. Students whose families do not own a computer also must compete for paper copies of assigned reading while FCPS increasingly relies on e-books but does not provide e-readers for less fortunate students. The library is essential to lower income residents who want to get an education and



look for employment. There should be increases, not further funding cuts to public libraries.

- **Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney and the Court Services Division** – The workload of these offices has continued to increase year after year, with no increase in staffing. They provide required services; they have no option to not do the work required by law. We urge you to increase funding that would support staff positions to handle the growing workload. We were happy to note that the budget continues the salary supplements for the magistrates eligible to receive them.

The League has long supported revenue diversification, and we are dismayed with lack of support for this idea in the General Assembly. We approve of the use of fees when necessary to continue to provide public services, and suggest the need for sliding scale arrangements so that all residents can participate in the activities that make Fairfax a nice place to live and work. We also suggest that you consider taking the steps needed to establish a meals tax. Fairfax citizens and visitors pay a tax to purchase food that they cook themselves; why should the food that restaurants prepare for them not be taxed?

We appreciate the efforts that the Board has made over the past several years to provide residents with essential services while cutting costs where possible and limiting increases that would create a hardship for county residents. We urge you to approve the budget increases we have highlighted, provide a safety net for those county residents most in need, and maintain those services important for county residents and to attract new businesses.

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## LWVFA Takes Exception to U.S. Senate's Health Care Bill

{Ed. Note: The following letter by our co-presidents on behalf of LWVFA was published by both the Fairfax Times and the Connection newspapers.]

To the Editor:

### It's Discrimination Against Women and It's Wrong

The League of Women Voters was born more than 90 years ago from the long fight to get women the right to vote. Since 1992, when League members studied health care policy, we have worked to ensure access to quality health care for all. The League also has a strong commitment and belief that public policy in a diverse society must affirm the right of all individuals to make their own reproductive choices.

That's why the League is so deeply concerned about recent proposals that would allow employers and health plans to block contraceptive services and discriminate against women.

By a narrow margin, the U.S. Senate recently defeated an amendment that would limit access to contraception for women if any employer or insurance plan has an undefined "religious or moral objection" to it. A couple's decision about whether and how to limit the size of their family is a

personal one and theirs alone to make. Giving employers the authority to limit available options is an inappropriate intrusion into the private lives of their employees.

We understand that not everyone agrees with the League on this subject. But we strongly believe that public institutions, including schools and hospitals that receive substantial federal assistance, should not limit the health care choices available to their employees. While no organization should be forced to violate its religious principles, institutions that serve the public at large should show the same respect for their employees' differing beliefs that they demand the community show for their own principles.

The League of Women Voters believes that all persons, regardless of gender, should be eligible for preventive health services. Allowing employers to exclude contraceptive services is discrimination based on sex, and it's wrong.

Sincerely,

Jane E. George  
Co-President

Julia Jones  
Co-President

**Mark your Calendars Today!**  
**League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area**  
**Fundraiser**  
**at the**  
**Dogfish Head Ale House**  
**August 21, 2012**  
11:30 am to 11:00 pm

Plan now for a summer get together with your unit, family or friends  
**Great food, great company, and a great time will be had by all!**

**And, 15% of the day's proceeds will be donated to the League!**  
(Last year's fundraiser netted \$1500!)

Greenbriar Shopping Center on Route 50 (13401 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy) in Fairfax

**Statement to the Fairfax County School Board**  
**March 29, 2012**

6.04 Resolution - Recommendation to adopt a resolution on the goal of the Fairfax County School Board to start high schools after 8 a.m.

Good evening Chairman Strauss, members of the board, and Superintendent Dale. My name is Virginia Fitz Shea and I am speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area. We support the proposed resolution to set a goal to achieve high school start times after 8:00 a.m. The League believes that it is desirable to delay the start time for instruction at all high schools and middle schools in order to provide the best opportunity for student learning and to promote adolescent health and safety.

We recommend that Fairfax County Public Schools fully explore the feasibility of adopting later start times for middle and high schools. We support the proposal to direct the Superintendent to identify and provide a list of practices in school divisions that start high schools after 8 a.m. -- including successful approaches in school districts that have changed from before to after 8 a.m. and in school districts that have traditionally had later morning start times.

We agree that the report should include information on how the school districts schedule elementary, middle, and high schools; arrange transportation; and schedule sports and after-school activities. It would also be beneficial to study the communications with stakeholders and the timetables for planning changes.

Thank you.

## This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

### Topic: Domestic Violence, Part 2

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 April 1, 2012, the locations were correct; please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend. Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations.

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#### Saturday, May 5

**10 a.m. At-Large Unit and Briefing**

Packard Center  
4026 Hummer Rd.  
Annandale 22003  
Contact: Barbara, 703-451-7238

**10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)**

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

**1 p.m. Fairfax City/Vienna (FX-V)**

Oakton Regional Library  
10304 Lynnhaven Pl.  
Oakton 22124  
Contact: Anne, 703-938-7304 or  
Liz, 703-281-3380

#### Tuesday, May 8

**10:00 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CC)**

Sully District Gov. Center  
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.  
Chantilly, 20151  
Contact: Olga, 703-815-1897

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

Yen Cheng Restaurant  
Main Street Center  
9992 Main Street 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: Jane, 703-960-6820

#### Wednesday, May 9

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

Mt. Vernon Dist. Government Center  
2511 Parkers Lane  
Alexandria 22300  
Contact: Louise, 703-960-0073

**10 a.m. McLean (MCL)**

Star Nut Gourmet  
1445 Laughlin Ave.  
McLean 22101  
Contact: Peggy, 703-532-4417 or  
Sharone, 703-734-1048

**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, May 10

**9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)**

2615 John Milton Dr.  
Herndon 20171  
Contact: Rona, 703-476-5758

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

4468 Edan-Mae Court  
Annandale 22003  
Contact: Nancy, 703-256-6570 or  
Peg, 703-256-9420

#### Monday, May 14

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

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

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## June Meetings:

### Tysons Corner Update

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

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**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER ©  
May, 2012**

**Jane E. George, Co-President  
Julie Jones, Co-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.

The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates for office, or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

### **LWVFA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**(Dues year is July 1 through June 30. Current dues year ends June 30, 2013.)**

**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)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(M)** \_\_\_\_\_ **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, Annandale, VA 22003