



Fairfax VOTER

February 2016

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State League Puts Emphasis on Voter Registration for Primary Elections

Co-Presidents Dianne Blais and Lois Page have authorized the release of two videos with information about the upcoming primaries. Leaguers Carol Lindstrom and Carolyn Caywood have been instrumental in preparing the videos. The co-presidents decided that the complications surrounding the upcoming March 1 presidential primaries deserved special publicity. According to Page, LWV-VA was especially concerned about informing 17-years-olds who will be 18 by the November election that they may vote in the primaries.

Both videos have been posted on the LWV-VA's facebook page. The access information for both videos has been sent out to League presidents, who have been asked to pass them on. It is especially important that copies be sent to local middle and high school newspapers and government classes. Members will also have received a Constant Contact notice about the videos and will be asked to send it to 10 friends and neighbors, plus any local media connections.

Calendar

February 2016

- 1 Fairfax *VOTER* deadline
- 2 LWV-VA Board Meeting, Richmond
- 3 League Lobby Day, Richmond
- 3 Women's Legislative Roundtable, Richmond
- 5 LWNCA Board meeting
- 8-11 LWVFA Unit meetings**
- 8 Last Day to register to vote in presidential primary
- 10 Women's Roundtable, Richmond
- 14 LWV founded (96th anniversary)
- 16 Centennial Rally for Equal Rights
- 17 LWVFA Board meeting**
- 17 Women's Roundtable, Richmond
- 23 Absentee ballot by mail deadline for the presidential primary
- 24 Women's Roundtable, Richmond

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Presidents' Message



Spring is coming, and by the end of this month we'll notice that there are more hours of daylight. The changing of the seasons is constant, just like other transitions. And sometimes, change happens so slowly that we barely notice. Often it takes a long look backward for us to realize how much things have changed.

Helen has a friend named Shannon, who grew up in New Orleans. When the city was ordered to integrate its public schools, Shannon's neighbors kept their children home from school. But Shannon's parents said, "This is the right thing to do. You're going to school." On their way to school, Shannon and her siblings walked a gauntlet of angry neighbors shouting hate speech at them.

Today American society is much more inclusive than it was in previous eras, but there are certain groups that are unhappy with some of these changes and would like to undo them.

This February 14 marks the 96th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters, an organization that participated in much of the positive change that has taken place.

In this presidential election year, some Americans will face challenges exercising their right to vote. This is where we in the League can help. If we work together to register voters, distribute election information, publicize VOTE411 and work as election officers, we'll help ensure that our neighbors have the information and the support they need to be informed voters.

We hope you'll join us in helping more Americans exercise their right to vote and in making sure that the inclusiveness that so many people fought for and some people died for continues for our grandchildren and their grandchildren to enjoy.

We'd like to close by acknowledging the many contributions of two LWVFA members who recently passed away – Kay Vandenburg and Bobby Stewart. Their efforts helped not only LWVFA but also our entire community.

We thank all of you for helping us to do what we do best. We couldn't do it without you.

In Memoriam

We are very sad to report the deaths of two long-time Leaguers who were also serving as Unit Chairs. Both will be greatly missed by their friends in LWVFA.

Kay Vandenburg, Greenspring Unit Chair, died Dec. 29, 2015. She was a 40-year member of LWVFA and long-time member and chair of the Springfield Unit as well. In 1972 Kay and her family moved to Hollin Hills, where she started her 10-year career in mortgage banking, then launched a real estate appraisal business. She moved to Greenspring in 2007, where she was active in the LWV, book groups, and the Treasure Chest. Her family suggests donations in her memory may be sent to Brennan Center for Justice (www.brennancenter.org) or Hillary Victory Fund (www.hillaryclinton.com/contribute/donate).

Barbara "Bobby" Stewart, Co-Chair of the Fairfax-Vienna Unit, died Dec. 31, 2015, from a heart attack while on a journey with her family to Ecuador. She had also been a League member for many years, originally in the Fairfax Day unit. Bobby lived in Oakton before moving to the Woodlands retirement community in Fairfax. A memorial service will be held at Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna at 3 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 29.

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2015 - 2016

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

Bits and Pieces . . .

February Programs: Well, They Are Different

Each unit has chosen its own program for February unit meetings. Some have chosen books and some have chosen movies. The subject of discussion must relate to a position that the League holds at national, state, regional or local level. Contact your unit chair if you are unsure of what is planned, so you can come prepared. Enjoy!

Committee Forming to Examine Ways to Attract New Members

Ad Hoc Membership Committee will soon be forming to explore ways to expand our membership. This will be a *short-term commitment*. Please contact Pat Nelson-Douvelis, gpdouvelis@aol.com, 703-790-1092 or Peggy Knight, president@lww-fairfax.org, 703-532-4417 with your ideas and availability.

Observer Corps Opportunities

We are looking for someone to represent LWVFA on three Fairfax Committees.

The Engineering Standards Review Committee (ESRC) looks at suggested changes to the Public Facilities Manual (PFM) and makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. Those changes are usually suggested by staff of the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services to address problems in the PFM. The manual sets forth the guidelines that govern the design of all public facilities which must be constructed to serve new development, including watershed regulations and sewer lines, roads and sidewalks: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/publications/pfm/>. The committee, which is a very congenial group, is scheduled to meet monthly, but generally gathers every second or third month. The meetings last two hours and are held at the Herrity Building.

Marcia McDevitt has served as the League representative on the **Alliance for Human Services Committee**. She has been elected as Secretary of this committee and must resign her League role. The committee meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Little River United Church of Christ

(across from the Annandale NOVA Campus) from 7:30 p.m. to about 8:45 p.m. This committee educates the Board of Supervisors about human services needs in the County.

The Health Care Advisory Board (HCAB) “reviews zoning and special exception applications for medical care facilities from a health care rather than land use perspective, using such criteria as community and medical need, access to care, cost, quality and continuity of care.” The HCAB then makes recommendations to the BOS and the Planning Commission. HCAB usually meets monthly at 7:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center.

If you are interested in serving on one (or more) committees or would like more information, please call Helen Kelly at 703-437-3087 or Peggy Knight at 703-532-4417 or email

Redistricting News

On January 7, a three-judge panel of the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of Virginia imposed a new congressional map that reduces the number of African American voters in the congressional district represented by Democrat “Bobby” Scott. In 2014, the Court ruled that the General Assembly’s original map illegally “packed” African American voters into the 3rd District. When the legislature failed to act in 2015, the governor asked the court to draw a new map. Congressional Republicans asked the U.S. Supreme Court to hear their appeal of the ruling.

Unless the Supreme Court halts implementation, the new map will lower the black voting age population in the 3rd District, from 56.3 percent to 45.3 percent and raise the black voting age population in the 4th District, represented by Rep. J. Randy Forbes, a Republican, from 31.3 percent to 40.9 percent. Scott’s district, which meandered from the Richmond area to Newport News, will now be centered in Hampton Roads. Richmond and Petersburg move into Forbes’ 4th District,

Save the Date

LWVFA Annual Meeting

April 23, 2016

The Annual Meeting for the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area will be at the Waterford at Fair Oaks, 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway. We hope that you will plan on joining us at this new venue. More details will follow.

Kelly Testifies Before Fairfax General Assembly Delegation Urging Support for Education, Transportation, and Local Authority

Fairfax, January 9 - Good morning, Senator Saslaw and members of the Fairfax Delegation to the General Assembly. I am Helen Kelly, Co-President of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area, speaking on behalf of our members in Fairfax County and City. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

The League of Women Voters applauds the Board of Supervisors' efforts to provide basic services in our challenging economy. But you also play a key role in giving Virginians the tools they need to succeed and to prosper. That's why we urge you to support through funding or legislation:

- K-12 Education
- Transportation
- Local Authority

The League of Women Voters supports the Board of Supervisors in asking for full funding for the Standards of Quality, reinstatement of the Cost of Competing Allowance, and more recognition of the extra expense of educating economically and culturally diverse students in our high cost-of-living area. Helping all high school students graduate is critical to future success. They can't even get an interview to flip burgers without that diploma.

Northern Virginia's economic success is important to the Commonwealth. Help us keep our heavily traveled roads

safe by giving us our fair share of the State of Good Repair funds and by providing financial support for transit needs at our major employment centers. This includes making these areas safe for and accessible to pedestrians and bikers.

And finally, the League supports the Board of Supervisors in their request that you grant Counties the authority to diversify their revenue sources, and to make land use and planning decisions that have no impact on the state. We also support their request that local governments have a representative on any State Commission or Study Committee that examines local issues.

Again we urge you to fully fund the Standards of Quality and to restore the Cost of Competing Allowance. We ask that you provide adequate funds to maintain roads and to provide transit options for our major employment centers. And we hope you will grant Counties the authority to diversify their revenue sources and to decide local issues that do not affect the State.

We invite you to join us for the Women's Legislative Roundtable every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. between January 20th and March 16th in the General Assembly Building Room 4 East. Virginians come from all over the state to attend these meetings. We hope to see you there too.

Starting the Year with Voter Registration

By: Sidney Johnson, Voter Services Coordinator

In this presidential election year League members in the Fairfax Area are alerting the public to the February 8 deadline for voter registration to be in time for the March 1 Presidential Primary Election. We have been distributing a flyer/poster to our members, hoping that they will print one and post it in a library or a community bulletin board in their neighborhoods. The posters inform voters that they have to choose a Republican or Democratic ballot, but only for this primary.

The campuses of Northern Virginia Community College and George Mason University are open to our holding voter registration tables. As the year goes on, they will have more students than usual taking part because their voting groups, such as Mason Votes, become more active in presidential

election years.

We are keeping in touch with Pat Ferguson, the Outreach Coordinator of the Office of Elections. She has an active voter registration program going into high schools this winter and spring. Many people do not realize that the Office of Elections meets with students in government classes to encourage them to get engaged in voting at the beginning of their adult lives. We also work with individual high school students on voter registration and education projects.

Carol Noggle of the Prince William League shared Rubyjean Gould's idea of sending her grandson a Facebook reminder to register to vote. Beth Tudan has posted this message on our Facebook page, too. Through February our members can find their own ways to publicize the primary and encourage their friends to vote.

Environmental Report: 2015 U.N. Climate Change Conference Emphasizes Need for Global Action

By Elizabeth Lonoff, At Large Member

Record-setting heat waves in India and France, Pacific Northwest rainforest fires, and years of California drought are cited as examples of climate change. New evidence indicates that sea levels could rise 10 times faster than already expected, and lakes are warming faster than the atmosphere and rising-with-temperature oceans, potentially threatening fisheries and water quality for drinking supplies, crop irrigation, and energy production. Last year was the warmest on record globally and the second warmest in the U.S., despite all the winter snowstorms.

Also in 2015, the global concentration of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere, the primary driver of recent climate change, repeatedly surpassed 400 parts per million (ppm). Putting this one-quarter increase since 1958 into context, Dr. Erika Podest, a NASA carbon and water cycle research scientist remarked in a December interview about passing this threshold that *“CO₂ concentrations haven’t been this high in millions of years. Even more alarming is the rate of increase in the last five decades and the fact that CO₂ stays in the atmosphere for hundreds or thousands of years. This milestone is a wake-up call that our actions in response to climate change need to match the persistent rise in CO₂. Climate change is a threat to life on Earth and we can no longer afford to be spectators.”* You can follow Mauna Loa (Hawaii) Observatory’s recent CO₂ readings, expected to stay above 400 ppm, as part of the global monitoring network at <http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/gmd/ccgg/trends/weekly.html>, and learn about past levels at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_dioxide_in_Earth%27s_atmosphere.

The 2015, U.N. Climate Change Conference was held in Paris from November 30 to December 11. It was the 21st yearly session since the 1992 U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 11th session after the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, when developed nations began to act. This resulted in the Paris Agreement, a consensus of nearly 200 nations to try to steadily cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to keep the Earth’s warming “well under” 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The commitments will become legally binding if joined by at least 55 countries which together represent at least 55% of GHG emissions. Such parties must sign the agreement by April 21, 2017, and adopt it within their own legal systems. See the full history at http://unfccc.int/essential_background/items/6031.php.

This global policy might not be enough to avoid some of the

worse effects of climate change that still are preventable. The Paris pledges will require a clean energy transition - with technological breakthroughs - and will take decades to implement. Some scientists predict that the 1.5°C stretch goal will require attaining zero net anthropogenic GHG emissions sometime between 2030 and 2050. After all, 350 ppm CO₂ had been considered the safety threshold.

Within a week of the Agreement, Congress moved to lift the ban on crude oil exports via the must-pass budget bill now signed into law. Environmental groups contend that this decision will boost oil production, while the science - and Paris commitments - necessitate leaving most remaining fossil fuels in the ground. Burning the additional oil could generate more than 515 million metric tons of carbon pollution annually, as much as 135 coal-fired power plants or 100 million passenger cars. And the many health risks of fracking will spread, presumably, when oil prices rebound, again. Environmental groups also object to the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) since it would give corporations the right to sue governments in closed tribunals for “lost” profits. Among other things, they argue, the TPP potentially could preempt U.S. laws restraining fracking, mining, and other fossil fuel extraction activities. You can find out how our national representatives have voted on environmental bills at <http://scorecard.lcv.org/>.

On December 16, the Maryland Commission on Climate Change recommended that our neighboring state reduce its GHG emissions by 40% by 2030 while strengthening efforts to improve its economy and creating new jobs. The Maryland Department of the Environment reports that the State already is on track to achieve a 25% reduction by 2020 as required under its 2009 Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Act. The current plan is estimated to create a net economic benefit of \$2.5-\$3.5 billion and help create and maintain 26,000- 33,000 new jobs. The commission’s (<http://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Marylander/Pages/mccc.aspx>) Executive Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Town Creek Foundation’s executive director and the Baltimore Gas & Electric Company’s state affairs director.

For more information about the Paris Agreement and previous climate talks, see Harvard Professor Robert N. Stavins’s blog at <http://www.robertstavinsblog.org/>. He has described the role of the Harvard Project on Climate Agreements as helping countries and international bodies “address climate change in ways that are scientifically sound, economically rational, and politically pragmatic.”

Priorities For Action 2016: LWV-VA Legislative Priorities for the 2016 GA Session

By Carol Noggle, LWV-VA Legislative Coordinator

The Virginia General Assembly convenes January 13 to process hundreds and hundreds of legislative proposals during the 60-day session. The League of Women Voters of Virginia is dedicated to analyzing these proposals and then advocating in support or opposition when they are supported by our positions.

Setting priorities for action is necessary because of the vast number of legislative proposals. We want all members to be prepared to respond to requests for specific grassroots lobbying. **Action alerts will give specifics on the bills so that members can respond with messages to individual legislators.**

All Virginians can view the daily floor sessions using the [General Assembly video](#) system. The floor sessions begin at noon each day with debate on bills that have passed out of committees. The House and Senate meet at the same time so some people watch both by using two computers. The agenda for the session is displayed.

Members are strongly encouraged to learn and use other features of the General Assembly <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov>, particularly those providing daily, even hourly, updates on the status of bills, the agenda and schedule of meetings of committees, subcommittees, press conference and commission meetings. [Lobbyist-in-a-Box](#) is available free for a limited number of five bills so that a subscriber-- an “armchair lobbyist” -- can choose bills of particular interest and track them and request hourly updates.

Well-informed engaged members will add immeasurably to advocacy success.

LWV-VA plans advocacy on these significant issues:

1. Voting Rights and Voter Protection that will extend power to the voter by establishing “No Excuse Absentee Voting” [HB68](#), establishing automatic Voter Registration with DMV transactions, assuring best practices using e-signature with online requests for Absentee Ballot applications, adding more eligible Photo IDs [HB32](#), increasing the hours and days for absentee in-person voting, and supporting a pilot program for primary election Vote Centers. To protect the vote, the League will oppose a Photo ID requirement for absentee ballot mail applications and

the addition of a Photo ID requirement to the electronic pollbooks. The League also will oppose proof of U.S. Citizenship for voter registration.

2. Public Safety: The League resolved at its 2015 Convention to support certain [firearm safety measures](#) that will prohibit possession of firearms by those subject to a protective order in cases of domestic violence. This bill [SB49](#) has been introduced: and referred to the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice.

3. Criminal Justice: The League resolved at its 2015 Convention to support regulations to reduce barriers to employment for persons with criminal records – the Ban the Box regulation that removes the query regarding criminal convictions from applications for employment. Legislation during the 2015 General Assembly session did not pass. In 2016 the League will actively advocate to Ban the Box.

The League’s criminal justice positions will support advocacy for legislation ([SB23](#)) to raise the felony larceny level from \$200 to at least [\\$500](#), to increase local diversion programs for arrestees awaiting trial or sentencing, and reforms to the court system such as [problem solving courts \(SB26\)](#) designed to reduce recidivism and reduce the incarcerated population.

4. Restore Voting Rights of Felons: The League has long supported expediting the restoration of felons’ voting rights. Our advocacy will continue to support expanding eligibility, convenience, public awareness, and an expedited process. The League also supports a Virginia constitutional amendment for automatic restoration of voting rights such as [HB107](#).

5. Redistricting: The League continues to support fair redistricting and fair elections including depoliticizing the process of drawing legislative district lines. Legislation to make changes in statutes has been proposed for the 2016 General Assembly by both [Senators](#) and [Delegates](#).

6. Safe, Protected and Preserved Environment: Virginia’s environment – its geography, air, land, water and resources -- varies greatly from coastal areas to the west, south and north. Challenges to meet the needs and interests of all Virginians for a safe and high-quality environment for today and the future are significant. Proposals in 2016 for regulations may include, among others, ones to affect fracking, controls for

clean air and water, protections for areas subject to recurrent flooding [Virginia Coastal Protection Act](#), and prohibition of uranium mining. Bills: [SB21 Clean Power Plan](#),

7. Women: Rights, Equality and Safety

LWV-VA will support legislation that promotes these League principles:

No group should suffer legal, economic or administrative

discrimination, every person should have access to a free education, and that the government should share in the solution of economic and social problems. Legislation in 2016 where these principles apply may include ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment [ERA](#), women's reproductive rights, equal pay for equal work, [nondiscrimination](#) in employment, [including for medical conditions](#), and housing. Bills: SB12, HB139, SJ1

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

Topic: Units "Do Your Own Thing"

Monday, Feb 8

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

Hunters Crossing Classroom
Spring Village Drive
Springfield 22150
Contact: Kathleen Henry, 703-451-6846

Wednesday, Feb 10

9:30 a.m. McLean Day (McL)

Anne Kanter's home
Contact: Sharone 703-734-1048
or Adarsh (703) 795-7281

9:45 a.m. Mt. Vernon Day (MVD)

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

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

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

Reston Evening (RE)

****FIELD TRIP****

*Special time: 2:00 pm
Tour of McConnell Public Safety & Transportation Operations Center
4890 Alliance Drive, Fairfax
22030*

Participants must register in advance to attend.

Contact: Kelly to register or for more information, 202-263-1311

Thursday, Feb 11

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

11037 Saffold Way
Reston, VA 20190
Contact: Barbara 703-437-0795

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

Packard Center
4026 Hummer Road
Annandale 22003
Contact: Marge 703-451-0589

10 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CCD)

Sully District Gov. Center
4900 Stonecroft Blvd.
Chantilly 20151
Contact: Leslie, 571-213-6384

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

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

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

March Meetings: Non-Profit Vote



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

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Peggy Knight, Co-President
Helen Kelly, 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, 2016.)

Membership Category: Individual \$65 ____ Household (2 persons–1 *VOTER*) \$90 ____; Donation \$ ____
 Student \$32.50 ____ (Coll. Attending _____)

Membership is: New ____ Renewal ____ Reinstatement ____ 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"/> Affordable Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Violence |

Mail to: LWVFA, 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403