



The Nonprofit VOTE Idea: A Way to Extend Our Voter Outreach

LWVFA is looking for ways to reach more potential voters. One of the approaches might be to seek local nonprofit social service agencies with whom to work to reach their clients. Nonprofit VOTE is a nationwide consortium of nonprofit organizations that has developed resources for agencies to learn how to encourage their clients to register to vote. It has also conducted two studies showing that its methods are effective. This month's report is an introduction to the organization and its resources.

At this time we are not ready to implement the training methods that Nonprofit Vote recommends, but we should consider whether to approach social service agencies with offers of support for encouraging their clients in to engage in civic activities. LWVUS has outreach materials that we can use at the outset. We may be able to build on them to help some agencies develop full-fledged voter outreach programs of their own.

It would be helpful to look at the website while reading the study and discussing it in the units. Google *Nonprofit Vote* or go to <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/>

Calendar

March 2016

- 1 Presidential Primary Election
- 2 Women's Roundtable, Richmond
- 4 LWVNCA Board meeting
- 5 Briefing and At-Large meeting,
Packard Center in Annandale**
- 7 *Fairfax VOTER* deadline
- 12 General Assembly session ends
- 8-14 Unit meetings**
- 13 Daylight Savings Time begins
- 13-19 Sunshine (open government) Week
- 16 LWVFA Board meeting**
- 21-28 FCPS spring break

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Presidents' Message



Happy Spring to all!! It is hard to believe that not only is spring just around the corner, Helen is more than halfway thru her last year as president and Peggy is more than halfway through her first year. We thought it might be a good idea to keep you current on what has been happening.

As you know, we started the year off with our first televised Meet and Greet thanks to the efforts of Sidney Johnson, Jim Southworth, the staff at Fairfax Public Access, and many LWVFA and partner volunteers. It was a very busy election season with thirteen Meet and Greet events. Sidney and other volunteers have continued to work hard at registering voters and providing information about the presidential primaries. LWVFA has been cooperating with LWV-VA in this effort including posting the two videos Virginia League created to inform the public about the importance of the presidential primaries and the eligibility of 17-year-olds who will be 18 in November to vote in the primaries. These videos are posted on our website and Facebook page.

VOTE411 provided candidate information to an increasing number of area voters thanks to Sheila Iskra's work. She and Julie Jones will be meeting with area Leagues later this spring and summer to coordinate VOTE411 information for the three Congressional races in Northern Virginia in 2016. Under Maggi Luca's guidance, "Facts for Voters" was printed in January and distributed throughout Fairfax County and to the state senators and delegates on Lobby Day February 3.

Thanks to Beth Tudan, we have an increased presence on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and are able to reach out to more varied population groups. LWVFA is also participating in the Beta test for an updated website. The transition to the new website should be completed this spring. Please let us know if you have questions about anything you see on our website. The LWVUS completed the update of the membership database this January.

We have purchased a projector to use when we speak to

Domestic Violence Hotline
(703) 360-7273

community groups and for our memberwide meetings. It is one less fee we must pay when renting venues for General and Annual Meetings. Great thanks to Wendy Fox-Grage and her husband Don for their donation of a sound system for our meetings. We have also added the PayPal option for joining the League and renewing our memberships. We are reactivating our YouTube account, so we can directly post our Meet and Greet events and other meetings as well as informational videos from LWVUS, LWV-VA and partner organizations.

We continue to cultivate partnerships with area Leagues and other organizations. We have made a series of presentations to Fairfax County Public School social studies teachers and students. We continue to partner with Zeta Phi Beta, AAUW, and the various district civic organizations and have also developed new partnerships with FCCPTA, Voice of Vietnamese Americans, and Inspire Virginia.

Increasingly, high school students are contacting us about volunteering with LWVFA to complete their community service hours. An Eagle Scout requested information and help from the League to establish voter registration drives for qualified high school students. We were fortunate to have a college intern for the month of January. He provided invaluable assistance to Beth with the Beta testing of the website and an outside view and suggestions for our website.

Our League could not have accomplished any of these things without your support. Thank You!!

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2015 - 2016

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Results of Money in Politics Discussions Shows Agreement on Most Questions

In December, 88 members considered Money in Politics consensus questions. The Fairfax Board sent this report to National in January.

PART I: Democratic Values and Interests with Respect to Financing Political Campaigns

1. What should be the goals and purposes of campaign finance regulation?

- a. Seek political equality for all citizens. **X** Agree
- b. Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns. **X** Agree
- c. Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office. **X** Agree
- d. Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public. **X** No consensus
- e. Ensure that economic and corporate interests are part of election dialogue. **X** No consensus
- f. Provide voters sufficient information about candidates & campaign issues to make informed choices. **X** Agree
- g. Ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections. **X** Agree
- h. Combat corruption and undue influence in government. **X** Agree

2. Evaluate whether the following activities are types of political corruption:

- a. A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interests in exchange for a campaign contribution. **X** Agree
- b. An officeholder or her/his staff gives greater access to donors. **X** No consensus
- c. An officeholder votes or works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals or organizations in order to attract contributions from them. **X** No consensus
- d. Office holder seeks political contributions implying there will be retribution unless a donation is given. **X** Agree
- e. The results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors. **X** No consensus

PART II Should spending to influence an election by any of the following be limited?

- a. Individual citizens, including wealthy individuals

like George Soros and the Koch Brothers. **X** Some spending limits

- b. Political Action Committees, sponsored by an organization, such as the League of Conservation Voters, Chevron, the American Bankers Association, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), whose campaign spending comes from contributions by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members and volunteers. **X** Some spending limits
 - c. For-profit organizations, like Exxon, Ben and Jerry's, General Motors, and Starbucks, from their corporate treasury funds. **X** No consensus
 - d. Trade associations, like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Wind Energy Association, and the American Petroleum Institute, from the association's general treasury funds. **X** Some spending limits
 - e. Labor unions, like the United Autoworkers and Service Employees International, from the union's general treasury funds. **X** Some spending limits
 - f. Non-profit organizations, like the Sierra Club, Wisconsin Right to Life, Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, American Crossroads, and Priorities USA, from the organization's general treasury funds. **X** Some spending limits
 - g. Non-partisan voter registration and GOTV (get out the vote) organizations and activities, like the LWV and Nonprofit Vote. **X** No consensus
 - h. Political parties, like the Republicans, Libertarians, and Democrats. **X** Unlimited spending
 - i. Candidates for public office spending money the candidate has raised from contributors. **X** Unlimited spending
 - j. Candidates for public office spending their own money. **X** No consensus
- ### **2. Should spending to influence an election by any of the following be limited?**
- a. Newspapers, like the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. **X** Unlimited spending
 - b. Television and other electronic media, like Fox News, CNN, MSNBC and CBS. **X** Unlimited spending
 - c. Internet communications, like Huffington Post, Breitbart, Daily Kos, and individual bloggers. **X** Unlimited

PART III**1. Should the League support?**

- a. Abolishing Super PACs and spending coordinated or directed by candidates, other than a candidate's own single campaign committee. **X** Agree
- b. Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists? (Restrictions may include monetary limits as well as other regulations.) **X** Agree
- c. Public funding for candidates? Should the League support:
 - i. Voluntary public financing of elections where candidates who choose to participate must also abide by reasonable spending limits? **X** Agree
 - ii. Mandatory public financing of elections where candidates must participate and abide by reasonable spending limits? **X** No consensus
 - iii. Public financing without spending limits on candidates? **X** Disagree

2. How should campaign finance regulations be administered and enforced?

- X b. By an odd-numbered commission with at least one independent or nonpartisan commissioner to ensure decisions can be made in case of partisan deadlock?
- X c. By structural and budget changes to the

FEC (commission appointments, staffing, security, budget, decision making process) that would allow the agency to function effectively & meet its legislative and regulatory mandates.

OPTIONAL COMMENTS (250 word limit):

1. Too many questions to report - difficult to discuss in time allowed. Many questions were poorly worded. Definitions missing or vague (i.e., What is a Super PAC? What does "sufficient" mean? How does one "ensure" or "guarantee"? Examples used were confusing to many members.)
2. Following areas ignored:
 - a. Mandate full disclosure of donors/contributions to Super PAC's.
 - b. Amount of money needed to run for elective office today.
 - c. Length of election cycle and whether it should be limited.
3. Unlimited spending is OK as long as there are limits on contributions.
4. It is important that the entity that oversees the election process be protected from interference by either Congress or the Administration. Assure that said entity receive adequate budget and staffing.
5. Questions ignore differences between media companies and public broadcasting companies that are governed by FCC rules.
6. Overall, members felt it was important that there be transparency in the electoral processes.

VOTE411 Service Taking Off

Vote 411, LWVUS Education Fund's online voters' guide, almost doubled its usage by new

users in Fairfax during 2015, compared to 2013. In addition, on average across the County, the number of sessions tracked on the website in 2015 rose more than two and one half times.

Of the 19 cities and towns studied, Burke, Lorton, Merrifield, Reston, and Vienna showed the greatest increases. Lorton topped the field. There were 151 sessions in 2015, compared with 14 in 2013. That is an increase of 137, in percentage terms, 979%. There were 110 new users, compared with 13 new users in 2013. In percentage terms, that is an increase

of 746%. Although three cities and towns logged fewer users last year, sessions in 16 localities increased. Increased advertising, bolstered by word of mouth and rewarding experiences, are promoting the service.

Sheila Iskra, the Voters' Guide Director for LWVFA, designed new Vote 411 information cards last year. Citizens can type in their own addresses to find information efficiently about the candidates in their own precincts, including the candidates' answers to key questions. This is the kind of substantive information that people want and need. Members will have plenty of these cards to hand out at voter registration and GOTV events this fall.

**MAKING
DEMOCRACY WORK®**

The Nonprofit VOTE Idea: A Way to Extend Our Voter Outreach

By Sidney Johnson, Voter Service Coordinator

Introduction

The Nonprofit VOTE Idea: A Way to Extend Our Voter Outreach A perennial goal of the League of Women Voters is to determine how best to leverage our volunteer resources to accomplish increased voter registration and turnout. Members of the LWVFA need to consider future commitments. We have been concerned about the decline in voter turnout and have learned that persons who are encouraged to vote by repeated personal contact are more likely to become habitual voters.¹ We also know that social service agencies have opportunities for that repeated personal contact.

Indeed, public assistance agencies that receive federal funds are required to offer opportunities for voter registration as part of their services. Therese Martin wrote two reports on the compliance of the Commonwealth’s agencies with this requirement for the League of Women Voters of Virginia. (See box.).

We in our local League have cooperated with nonprofit agencies before. A booklet compiled by LWVFA says, “1964 was the year of the big voter registration drive after the poll tax was declared unconstitutional. Every organization in the county was to send us their membership lists, to be checked by us against the list of registered voters. Then they would receive back a list of non-registered members whom they might like to register and vote.”²

The difference now is that the Nonprofit VOTE consortium has developed detailed training methods to help nonprofits themselves to engage their clients in registering and voting in a systematic manner, and the consortium has demonstrated that its methods are successful.

In this study we will

- Present the League’s position
- Explain what Nonprofit VOTE is
- Demonstrate a congruence between Non-profit VOTE’s goals and our own
- Describe some of Non-profit VOTE’s methods and resources
- Provide evidence for the

success of Nonprofit VOTE’s methods

- Suggest methods recommended by LWVUS that we could use to approach and assist local nonprofit agencies
- Show what we have done so far
- Ask for the views of LWVFA members on the best ways for us to reach out to prospective voters.

Statement of Position on Citizen’s Right to Vote,
Announced by National Board, March 1982:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.³

**Voter Registration Opportunity for Clients of Public Assistance Agencies
National Voter Registration Act 1993**

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 requires each state to “(2) designate as voter registration agencies (A) all offices in the State that provide public assistance; and (B) all offices in the State that provide State-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities.” NVRA Sec. 1973gg-5 <http://www.justice.gov/crt/title-42-public-health-and-welfare-chapter-20-elective-franchise-subchapter-i-h-national-voter>

Nonprofit agencies that receive federal or state funding are required to offer their clients the opportunity to register to vote. The current initiative to contact nonprofit agencies does not involve monitoring their compliance with this requirement, but it is important to know that the League of Women Voters of Virginia conducted a limited survey of 21 DSS offices in 18 jurisdictions and wrote two reports, one in 2012 and one in 2015. ^{17,18}

A LWVUS Education Fund study showed “that voters and nonvoters differ in several key respects: nonvoters are less likely to grasp the impact of elections on issues that matter to them; nonvoters are more likely to believe they lack information on which to base their voting decisions; nonvoters are more likely to perceive the voting process as difficult and cumbersome; and nonvoters are less likely to be

contacted by organizations encouraging them to vote.”⁴ Focusing on racial and ethnic minorities and other underrepresented populations, Leagues worked in coalition with other organizations to expand their reach and let voters know they have a stake in the system.⁵

At the national level, the League has connections with Nonprofit VOTE. Nancy Tate, the Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of the United States until 2015, was on the National Advisory Board. Currently, Maggie Bush, Senior Elections Manager, is the LWVUS contact with Nonprofit Vote. The League of Women Voters of Virginia does not have an association at the state level with Nonprofit VOTE.

However, many local Leagues across the country do participate in Nonprofit VOTE’s activities, particularly in National Voter Registration Day, which is the last Tuesday in September each year. The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area is considering whether it can use some of the methods of Nonprofit Vote to make its voter outreach more effective.

What is Nonprofit VOTE?

Nonprofit VOTE was founded in 2005 by a consortium of state nonprofit associations and national nonprofit networks to provide resources and training for the nonprofit sector on how to conduct nonpartisan voter participation and election activities. The consortium is nationwide but is based in Massachusetts. According to its mission statement, “There are more than [one million registered 501\(c\)\(3\) nonprofit organizations](#) that [employ over 13.5 million people](#), rely on [61 million volunteers](#), and serve and engage millions more.

Nonprofits represent democracy’s highest ideals of public service, active citizenship and commitment to a better society. With their natural engagement assets and unparalleled reach, nonprofits are particularly well suited to encourage voter participation. And they have a proven impact on participation when they do.”^{6]}

Potential for Improvement in Voter Outreach

We learned in our own September 2015 study *Voter Turnout for Elections is Declining. Where and Why?* that personal engagement is a vital factor in engaging citizens in voting. It is difficult for our local League to make a substantial difference in our contacts with registered voters. We have many lively conversations with the public at our events held at libraries and some local shopping centers and fairs. We do provide information to the general public, especially at our candidate forums and through “Facts for Voters” and “What’s On the Ballot.” But our voter registration tables are sparse and truly engage few citizens.

Social service providers in nonprofit agencies build up

relationships of trust with their clients. They are more likely to gain the attention of the people they serve because of this trust. Their clientele is drawn from the younger, more diverse, and lower income segments of the population—the very persons who are generally considered to be disengaged and uninterested in political matters. Nonprofit VOTE’s studies have shown that, once these persons do become motivated to register, they follow through with voting at higher rates than the average population.⁷

We in the League have expertise in the registration process, voting requirements, and resources for educating oneself on the issues. We could provide basic civics information for new citizens. What can we do to offer our resources and energies to nonprofits in the most effective way?

What Does Nonprofit VOTE Do?

Nonprofit VOTE grows by increasing its partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country. Currently it has over 114 state and national partners.⁸

Briefly, its goals are to

- Provide high quality resources for nonprofits and social service agencies
- Build lasting capacity for nonpartisan voter and election engagement
- Develop and evaluate agency-based models for voter engagement
- Strengthen the nonprofit sector and encourage new leadership

This is the consortium’s justification for its existence and purpose:

- Nonprofits have access to communities that are typically underrepresented in the political process.
- Nonprofits are trusted messengers.
- Nonpartisanship does not mean nonparticipation.¹⁰

Evidence of Effectiveness

Nonprofit VOTE has produced two reports analyzing and comparing the voter turnout of clients who were contacted about voting by their social service agencies with the turnout of the general population. Although the reports were not produced by a disinterested academic body, Nonprofit VOTE participants collected quantitative information that was analyzed by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University.

What are Low-Propensity Voters?

The Nonprofit VOTE study used a concept and data developed by Catalist (<http://www.catalist.us/>), a company that compiles and stores data on voting-age individuals in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The company analyzes voter file and Census data and adds demographic information from surveys and other methods to compare voting activity among different demographic groups. The company was founded in 2006.

Low-propensity voters are those least likely to vote, based on whether they belong to demographic groups that generally do not vote—minority groups, the young, and those of low income. Political parties usually do not include these people in their campaigns, preferring to devote their limited resources to targeting the more rewarding higher-income, middle-class, older voters. (Johannesen, p. 10)

However, Nonprofit VOTE has demonstrated that low-propensity voters do register and vote, provided they are encouraged to do so by persons they know and trust.

“Catalist’s Vote Propensity Model is a nationwide model estimating each individual’s likelihood of voting in the upcoming November general election. It is based on a wide range of variables available at Catalist, most prominently an individual’s voting, registration and other civic behaviors. It is also draws on but is not restricted to other factors, such as commercial behavior, demographics, and population-level information such as Census data.” (Brad Lippmann, Personal Communication, January 25, 2016)

The first study concerned results from the presidential election year 2012. The second analyzed results from a non-presidential election year, 2014. Although the percentage of voters was less in the non-presidential year, the results of both showed a consistent pattern of greater engagement in civic activity by clients who had registered to vote or pledged to vote.

Both studies used the Track the Vote method. The nonprofit agencies kept a record of the clients they registered to vote. If their clients were already registered, the agencies offered a pledge to vote card to the client for signing. This card would be held by the agency until it was mailed to the client the day before the election as a reminder. The agency also recorded the names of the persons they registered and gave pledge cards to. The list was compared with the state voter files after the election to see who actually voted. The files were obtained from Catalist, a Washington D.C.-based organization that collects data about voting from government and commercial sources. (See box.)

For the first study, *Can Nonprofits Increase Voting Among Their Clients, Constituents, and Staff? An Evaluation of the Track the Vote Program*, 94 nonprofit service providers collected data on a pool of 33,741 voters.¹¹

Table 1 - Voter Turnout in 2012

Demographic Characteristic	Turnout of Nonprofit Clients	Turnout of All Registered Voters
	Percent	Percent
Asian	76	58
Black	71	64
White	79	71
Latino	72	54
Income < \$25k/yr	68	53
< 30 years old	68	53

Lehman and Gutierrez, table created from information on p. 1

Voter turnout by clients that the nonprofit agencies tracked was 74 percent, compared with voter turnout by all registered voters of 68 percent. Disparities in voter turnout by age, income, race and ethnicity narrowed compared with large turnout gaps revealed in the Census data studied for the report. Nonprofits had the greatest effectiveness among low-propensity voters. If they were contacted by an agency, they were three times more likely to vote than the population of all registered low-propensity voters.¹²

For the second report, *Engaging New Voters: The Impact of Nonprofit Voter Outreach on Client and Community*

Turnout, Nonprofit VOTE asked 129 agencies in nine states to collect data on how they encouraged their clients to register to vote and to follow up by voting. A key mechanism again was the pledge card: if the client was already registered, he or she was asked to sign a pledge to vote.¹³

Table 2 - Voter Turnout in 2014

Demographic Characteristic	Turnout of Nonprofit Clients	Turnout of All Registered Voters
	Percent	Percent
Asian	48	33
Black	49	38
White	59	52
Latino	35	31
Income < \$25k/yr	39	30
< 30 years old	28	22

Johannesen, table created from information on p. 2-3

The average turnout of all nonprofit pledge card voters was 59 percent, compared with 48 percent of all registered voters. Nonprofit low-propensity clients were more than twice as likely to vote as the population of low-propensity registered voters.

Factors Favorable to Success

In addition to collecting data about client participation in voting, Nonprofit VOTE also surveyed the participating agencies to find out what factors mattered most in the success or failure of their attempts to encourage voting among their clients. The findings were similar in both studies.

In the first study

- Nonprofits wanted to advance their own organizations' missions by empowering their clients.
- Nonprofits faced their biggest challenge in staffing their voter registration and pledge activities, in part due to insufficient planning and inability to dedicate staff.
- The most identifiable success factors were motivated staff and volunteers and strong support from a state or national partner in the form of training, check-ins, and materials.
- Nonprofits used a range of agency-based strategies to engage voters within their daily activities.¹⁴

In the second study

- Successful nonprofits had a motivated staff

that understood the connection of voter engagement to their mission and their broader work serving and supporting clients.

- Successful nonprofits set goals and started earlier with planning and initiating voter engagement work.
- Nonprofits collected the most registrations and pledges doing "active tabling" on a regular schedule at the agency, as well as agency-sponsored events.
- Nonprofits made sure their staff and volunteers were registered to vote as well.¹⁵

A Tour Around the Website

To get an idea of what the consortium has to offer, it helps to look at the website. <http://www.nonprofitvote.org> by entering the topics in the banner across the screen.

These are summaries of what the banner headings introduce:

- National and State Partners. The logo of each partner functions as a link that takes the viewer to the partner's website. It's easy to find names and contact information for the staff.
- How it Works has three sections: How it Works, Why it Works, and Get Started. The first two explain why the consortium thinks that registering voters through nonprofits is effective and beneficial for the nonprofit as well as the voter. An engaged voter is going to keep an eye on policies that affect his or her interests, including the services he or she receives through the agencies.
- Get Started addresses the nonprofit agencies themselves with a step-by-step method for educating and engaging the staff and volunteers at the agency and instructions for them to organize voter registration activities.
- Resources contains links to posters, factsheets, power points, and archived webinars. The webinars are the human face of the consortium to its partners.
- Popular has a list of the most frequently accessed and used instructional materials. New ones are always being added. For example there is a factsheet on how to avoid violating HIPPA rules when helping with voter registration.

Training Materials

The heart of Nonprofit VOTE's service is its extensive provision of detailed training materials for agencies that want to encourage their clients to vote. In the Resources section are timelines, factsheets, posters, kits of materials, and archived webinars. These are narrated powerpoint presentations.

A good example is the publication that can be downloaded from the Resources section, "A Voter Participation Starter Kit: for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies." This booklet first explains to the agencies why their participation

is so vital. Then it has step-by-step guidelines for planning voter registration and engagement activities and explanations of what nonprofit agencies may and may not do under the law. The starter kit explains the nonprofit model in a nutshell.

Agency-based Voter Engagement Model

Nonprofit VOTE encourages voter participation work that can be integrated into a nonprofit's day-to-day activities. It is an agency and community based approach that:

- Reaches people nonprofits interact with every day at their sites and during their programs.
- Uses the personal contacts they already have at points of service, classes, trainings, meetings, neighborhood activities, and more.
- Leverages the core strength of their nonprofit sector's civic assets — their trust, social mission, personal relationships, and community base.

This integrated approach both differs from and complements traditional campaigns that contact voters in their homes through canvassing and phone calls. It has become challenging and expensive to reach voters at home, so many populations are inevitably missed. The populations most affected by this include new and infrequent voters and the more mobile and less resourced populations served by nonprofits.

Nonprofits and service agencies have the capacity to reach people about voting where they learn, engage, and receive services. Through an agency-based approach, nonprofits can make a vital contribution to promoting voter and civic participation without adding a new program — but by incorporating messages and activities about voting into what they already do.¹⁶

Our Experience So Far

The best way to introduce League to a social service agency was through one of our members who had a long-standing relationship with it, so that she would be trusted. JoAnn Hersh of the Mount Vernon Evening unit has volunteered with United Community Ministries (UCM) in Alexandria for many years. It is a private charity, though it does get government grants.

UCM has six satellite offices/branches either on or just off Route 1. Two are shelters, one is a thrift shop, another is a part-time school teaching ESL and U.S. government in preparation for those planning to take the U.S. citizenship test. JoAnn found that Richard Dobber, the Social Services Director, was enthusiastic and gave her not only permission to spread our voting materials widely but also names and phone numbers of the satellite groups' leaders. She

recommended that we try to find other umbrella agencies with connections to a similar variety and extent of services.

JoAnn and Jane Hilder, also of the Mount Vernon Evening unit, and Sidney Johnson, LWV Voter Service coordinator, introduced the idea of voter registration to the social service personnel in the UCM in Alexandria. We were welcomed at two of their staff meetings, and the social service agents accepted the placement of display cases containing voter registration materials in their offices. We did not ask them if we might come to their offices, monitor them, or train them. We started by asking for something simple. JoAnn and Dorothea Brandt also hosted voter registration and get-out-the-vote tables twice at the UCM vegetable giveaway at the end of the month.

At the second meeting with the staff, Jane was asked to have voter registration tables at the fairs and festivals in the community and to provide one or two classes in civics. The issue was not so much just voter registration as voter participation—having social services staff encourage clients to vote. The staff felt clients did not understand who can modify or change what. They think the U.S. president is all powerful and see no need to vote in other elections. They don't understand the role of other elected officials. We did not have the resources to respond to this request at that time, so we did not follow up, though we did discuss some possibilities. We hope to meet with UCM again this year.

At a recent committee meeting, members suggested that we develop an information card that can be included in the packets given to persons who have just completed a house purchase. Ronna Pazdral is working with the Northern Virginia Literacy Council to have an information card available for them. She has also designed a pledge to vote card, based on a LWVUS template, that we can hand out at voter registration and GOTV events. The Board is considering recommendations for using it.

LWVUS and Nonprofit VOTE

In her role as the Senior Elections Manager, Maggie Bush has participated in some of the Nonprofit VOTE webinars, but her main role right now is to be on the National Voter Registration Day committee. (personal communication, January 21 and 27,).

She said that it might be better for us to start with training materials from the League for improving our outreach. Some of these methods can involve contacting local educational and social service bodies. Her suggestions:

- Reach out to venues like local Head Start centers, community health agencies, county community centers, to see if they are interested in having ac-

- cess to the League's election-related resources.
- Contact local organizations serving new citizens/Spanish language communities to expand the League's reach.
 - E-mail blasts—mass e-mailings to organizations that want to receive links to the state's online voter registration portal, link to your League's VOTE411 voter guide (once it is available), information about the photo ID requirement to vote, and so on.
 - Share publications, such as "Electing the President." <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/electing-president%E2%80%9D-2016-supplement-now-available> -
 - Share "Tips for Voter Registration Drives" which has some good ideas for the kinds of partners that Leagues typically work with for voter registration: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/tips-successful-voter-registration-drives>
 - Share the youth voter registration training manual, which has some great planning tools, template visibility items suitable for all groups. <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/high-school-voter-registration-training-manual-3rd-edition>

What can we do to extend our resources and energies in the most effective way?

1. Would you recommend that we take on more voter registration and Get Out the Vote activities as individual members? as units? as residents of a supervisory district? as liaisons with a particular agency?
2. Would you prefer that we maintain our present level of activity as individual members? as units? as the LWVFA?
3. Does your unit want to participate in any activities with a nonprofit agency?
4. Does any member of your unit want to participate in activities with a nonprofit agency, preferably one where she is known?
5. What does your unit think in general of adopting some of the goals and aims of Nonprofit VOTE?

Conclusion

This study has two purposes. The first is to familiarize LWVFA with the workings of Nonprofit VOTE, a consortium that has demonstrated success in reaching persons who are not usually expected to vote. The second is to ascertain the extent to which League members want to work with local nonprofit agencies, whether using Nonprofit VOTE methods, those suggested by LWVUS, or a combination. Now that we know that nonprofits can be effective at engaging committed new voters, let's build on

relationships that some of us already have with social service agencies. Let's offer these agencies League the support of League methods and materials by taking the first step.

End Notes

1. League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area. "Voter Turnout for Elections is Declining. Where and Why?" Fairfax Voter, September 2015, p. EF-4
2. "20 years! League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area, 1948-68." Edited by Baba Freeman
3. League of Women Voters of the United States. Citizens Right To Vote: The League's Position. <http://lwv.org/content/voting-rights>
4. League of Women Voters. Impact on Issues, p. 11
5. League of Women Voters. *Impact on Issues*, pp 11-12
6. Nonprofit VOTE: Mission Statement <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/our-mission/>
7. Johannesen, Julian, "Engaging New Voters: The Impact of Nonprofit Voter Outreach on Client and Community Turnout," 2015, p. 6
8. Nonprofit VOTE: Our Partners <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/our-partners/>
9. Nonprofit VOTE: Mission Statement
10. Nonprofit VOTE: How it works <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/how-it-works/>
11. Lehman, Sophie and Gutierrez, Isela, "Can Nonprofits Increase Voting Among Their Clients, Constituents, and Staff? An Evaluation of the Track the Vote Program," 2013, pp. 1-2
12. Lehman and Gutierrez, pp. 1-2.
13. Johannesen, p. 25
14. Lehman and Gutierrez, p. 2
15. Johannesen, p 3
16. Nonprofit VOTE, "A Voter Participation Starter Kit for Nonprofits and Social Service Agencies" <http://www.nonprofitvote.org/documents/2010/08/a-voter-participation-starter-kit.pdf> p. 3
17. Martin, Therese. "Report of the League of Women Voters of Virginia Survey of Virginia's Department of Virginia's Social Service Compliance with Section 7 of the NVRA" February 9, 2012 http://www.lwv-va.org/files/pavp_2012_02_lwv-va_dss_survey_report.pdf
18. Martin, Therese. Taking Another Look: Virginia's Public Assistance Agency Compliance with National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) Section 7 (Voter Registration Agencies)." March 23, 2015. http://lwv-va.org/files/pavp_2012_02_lwv-va_dss_survey_report.pdf



~ You are cordially invited to attend ~



LWVFA Annual Meeting
on
Saturday, April 23, 2016
at
Waterford at Fair Oaks
12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway
Fairfax, VA 22033

Meeting Agenda

- 9:30 a.m. Registration & Coffee
- 10:00 a.m. Business Meeting
- 11:00 a.m. Speaker: TBA
- 12:00 noon Luncheon (Cost \$40 per person)
- 2:00 p.m. Conclusion of Business Meeting

Deadline for Reservations: April 13, 2016

None Accepted after April 13

Menu: House Salad, Chicken Picata (Chicken cooked in herb and cheese butter), Virginia Style Green Beans, & Honey Glazed Carrots, Bread and butter, Dessert, Coffee Service

Program is free; Luncheon, \$40 per person.

Make checks payable to LWVFA and mail with reservation form to:
2016 Annual Meeting, 11020 Burywood Lane, Reston, VA 20194

Name _____ Lunch @\$40 ea. _____

Phone Number & E-mail _____

Guest Name(s) _____ Lunch @\$40ea. _____

Total \$ enclosed _____

For special dietary needs or questions, call Viveka at 703-404-0498



League of Women Voters of Montgomery County

"Use Your Voice"
with Patty Griffin, Sara Watkins and Anais Mitchell

**SINGER/SONGWRITERS UNITE WITH THE
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES
 FOR MAJOR U.S. TOUR AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT DRIVE**



Patty Griffin

Only Washington, DC area engagement!

**MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE
 Rockville, MD**

TUESDAY, MARCH 1, 2016 at 8:00pm

To purchase tickets, visit Strathmore.org

GRAMMY® Award-winning singer/songwriter Patty Griffin is teaming with fellow artists Sara Watkins and Anais Mitchell for a major U.S. tour and voter engagement drive in conjunction with the League of Women Voters. The "Use Your Voice Tour 2016," produced by Columbia Artists Management LLC, gets underway February 12 with visits 37 U.S. cities through early April.

"The League is excited to be teaming up with Patty Griffin, Sara Watkins and Anais Mitchell to make sure all voices are heard on Election Day 2016," said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters. "We're ready to help fans get the election information they need, whether it's how to update their voter registration, find easy-to-understand local candidate and voting information, or learn about getting involved in the League's work."

The League of Women Voters Montgomery County, a nonpartisan organization of women and men, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Our goal is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BECOME A MEMBER

League of Women Voters of Montgomery County, MD

12216 Parklawn Drive, Suite 105, Rockville MD 20852, 301-984-9585, info@mont.lwvmd.org

www.lwvmocomd.org, Follow us on Twitter [@mocomdlwv](https://twitter.com/mocomdlwv), Like us on Facebook [mont.lwvmd.org](https://www.facebook.com/mont.lwvmd.org)

March: Celebrating Women's History

By Mary Jane Cleary and Dawn Schulz

In 2014, I received an invitation to attend the Women's Bar Association of Illinois Centennial Celebration as one of the Past President/Honorees. A reception, program and banquet was held at a beautiful ballroom venue overlooking Lake Michigan in Chicago. Although the women attorneys were not accepted as members in the established Illinois Bar Associations at that time being the early 1900s. So in the early 1900s the women came together to establish the Women's Bar Association of Illinois which does extend membership to male lawyers. It was marvelous to look out at the huge crowd composed of many men and women from the courts as well as family and friends joining together to celebrate 100 years.



Whether we are called a league of women or a sisterhood of women or “remembering the ladies,” we are individual women standing shoulder to shoulder seeking gender equality. It neither ended nor began with the adoption in 1920 of the 19th Amendment that gave women the right to vote. *A New Zealand lawyer informed me that women achieved that right in New Zealand long before we did.* The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) in 2001 authored a paperback booklet entitled “Remembering The Ladies” which gives insight into that era.

The 2015 book entitled “Sisters In Law: How Sandra Day O’Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsberg Went To The Supreme Court And Changed The World” by Linda Hirshman is a comprehensive study of the different ways the first and second women to sit as Justices on the High Court approached gender equality by seeking legal changes. Sandra Day O’Connor was nominated by President Ronald Reagan and, with Senate approval, was appointed in 1981 as the first woman Justice on the United State Supreme Court. Twelve years later, President Bill Clinton nominated Ruth Bader Ginsberg and, with Senate approval, appointed her as the second

woman Justice to serve the High Court. *These acts remind me of an October session in the late 1970; I was 1 of 2 women, together with 24 male lawyers, presented to the all-male Justices sitting that day seeking admission to practice before the Court.*

As pointed out in the Hirshman book, Justices O’Connor and Ginsberg came from different parts of the country, different backgrounds, different colleges and law schools and different life experiences. Each approached a case in an individual manner yet there was a commonality of among “sisters” on the bench. Also, the book pointed out that there were few women law school students in each class, they were usually provided poor facilities, and they were often told they were taking a seat meant for a man. .

At the time that I went to law school--1973--at the University of South Dakota, where class sizes were about 75, I was in only the second class that had more than one woman occasionally (about 10 started). During one class of all the students a professor who was on the Admissions Committee told the class that he was tired of hearing from a few of the men about how women were taking seats meant for men. He said that, generally speaking, the women had better grades and the men had better scores on the admissions test. One of my classmate’s father was a lawyer, who had graduated from the same school in 1936. He was very proud of his daughter but once, when asked how many “girls” were in the class, he said “Well. Enough is enough!” Contrast that with my husband’s experience. He started law school the same year as I did and finished at Northeastern University in Boston. He said that women were the majority in his class.

Finding a job was difficult as many firms did not hire women lawyers. As a result, many women lawyers looked to the public sector, which did hire them. This was true even during the 1970s when many more women were in law school. Additionally, things were helped when seven years ago the “Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act” for gender pay equality was signed into law by President Barack Obama.

Matters were also helped by such things as the LWVFA partnering with the Fairfax County Circuit Court system a few years ago to study the Domestic Violence courts in the County. This study showed women lawyers representing the County as well as the defense and women judges sitting to hear the cases.

To quote Hirshman from the last paragraph in the last chapter titled “Our Heroines”, “(W)hen during the flap over Sotomayor’s confirmation an interviewer asked Ginsberg if the results might be different in discrimination cases if more women sat on the

Supreme Court, Ginsberg gave the answer: ‘I think for the most part, yes, I would suspect that because the women will relate to their own experiences.’”

Take time in March to reflect and recognize what still needs to be accomplished. There is still work to be done.

Italicized comments contributed from a Round Table discussion at the McLean unit.

Environmental Update: Environmental Leadership Starts Early

By Elizabeth Lonoff

Congratulations to Meredith Keppel of Herndon on being accepted into the highly competitive Coastal Studies for Girls (CSG). Through community living and experiential learning, this school aims to nurture girls’ intellect, curiosity, confidence, and strength. Thanks to a scholarship and crowdsourcing, Meredith is attending CSG’s semester-long environmental science and leadership program for 10th-grade girls on the Maine coast.

While packing this winter, Meredith shared: “I’m really looking forward to the learning environment I believe CSG will provide. My hope is to find a place where the attendees push each other and strive for more knowledge, creating an intellectual community I think I will really enjoy it. Not to mention that we will be actively learning, not just sitting in a classroom hearing about this feature or that function. I’m really hopeful that I will be challenged both personally and academically during my four-month stay.”

Meredith became interested in the environment from attending a nature camp while in middle school. She now is a stream monitor and riparian-buffer tree planter with the Goose Creek Association, as well as a volunteer with Friends of Runnymede Park and Vice President of Loudoun Habitat for Humanity’s Youth United. Inspired by the work of famed mycologist and Fungi Perfecti founder Paul Stamets, Meredith has a special interest in fungi.

One of the few invited speakers over the years who isn’t a college instructor or government staffer, Meredith gave a

talk about mushrooms at the January 9th Green Breakfast. She covered basic anatomy of fungi and some new theories and methods for using mushrooms in environmental remediation. For example, oyster mushrooms can safely restore a Brownfield in three years. Meredith made a similar presentation at the quarterly Herndon Environmental Network meeting in October and expects to give a TEDxYouth Talk in the fall.

As you may recall, Green Breakfasts are gatherings hosted by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District to discuss environmental topics in an informal setting on the second Saturday of every other month. The 8:30-10 a.m. format usually is a \$10 buffet breakfast followed by introductions, a speaker, Q&A, and announcements for local activities. Attendees include representatives of local agencies, businesses, and nonprofits, interested community members, students, and lawmakers. See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/greenbreakfast.htm> for announcements.



Photo credit: Meridith Keppel and Nick Faulkner

This Month's Unit Meeting Locations

Topic: Extending Voter Outreach

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 February 1, 2016, the locations were correct; please use phone numbers to verify sites and advise of your intent to attend. Some meetings at restaurants may need reservations.

Saturday, Mar 5

10 a.m. At-Large Unit and Briefing

Packard Center
4026 Hummer Road
Annandale 22003
Contact: Judy, 703-725-9401

7:30 p.m. Reston Evening (RE)

Hunter Mill District Community Room B
1801 Cameron Glen Drive
Reston 21090
Contact: Kelly, 202-263-1311

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

Wednesday, Mar 9

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

StarNut Café
1445 Laughlin Ave.
McLean 22101
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)

7902 Bracksford Ct.
Fairfax Station 22039
Contact: Lois, 703-690-0908

Thursday, Mar 10

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

1606 Greenbrier Court
Reston, 20190
Contact: Nancy, 703-437-4419

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

Monday, Mar 14

TBD Greenspring (GSP)

Hunters Crossing Classroom
Spring Village Drive
Springfield 22150
Contact: Edith, 703-644-3870

April: Annual Meeting

Waterford at Fair Oaks



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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**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER ©
 March, 2016
 Peggy Knight, Co-President
 Helen Kelly, Co-President
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 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:

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
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| <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