



THE VIRGINIA VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF VIRGINIA

Volume 56, Issue 1

Summer 2009

www.LWV-VA.org

Calendar Highlights:

For full details on events see web site

www.LWV-VA.org

and select 'Calendar'.

August 2009

- 26 Women's Equality Day
- 28 LWV-VA Board Meet
- 29 Fall Workshops

September 2009

- 17 Governor's Debate (Fairfax Chamber)

October 2009

- 5 Last Day to Register to Vote in Nov Election
- 12 Governor's Debate (LWV-VA)

November 2009

- 3 General Election
- 16 Prefiling – GA 2010
- 17, 19 Events for 100th Anniversary
- 20 Equal Suffrage 100th Anniversary

December 2009

- 1 LWV-VA Board Meet
- 2 Pre-Session Women's Roundtable (WRT) (Meet & Luncheon)

League of Women Voters of Virginia Summer Workshops

Saturday, August 29, 2009 9:00 a.m. — 4:15 p.m.

**Holiday Inn University & Conference Center
1901 Emmet Street, Charlottesville**

We urge you to join us for a day of League training. The LWV-VA provides this training & networking opportunity to help you grow your League. You will leave with information, handouts and a sense of what is happening in League and how it can help you do your work and grow the League.

Speaker: R. Marc Johnson of the Sorenson Institute

Workshops:

Membership: After the Ask, the Follow-up

Technology Tools: What's Out There and How Can We Use It
Social Networking platforms:
Blogs, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Video

More information and registration form included in this newsletter

Cost \$25 includes lunch
Respond by Friday, August 21, 2009

Join us for a great day.

The VIRGINIA VOTER is published by the League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWV-VA).

The League of Women Voters of Virginia, a non-partisan, political organization encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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From the President's Desk

Olga Hernandez, President LWV-VA

It is with pleasure that I continue to serve as your president for another two years. Thank you for the opportunity. This has been a very busy summer. Having just organized convention we are now in the mist of putting the final touches on the anniversary book. We will have several events to commemorate the first meeting of suffragist in Richmond in 1909 to establish the Equal Suffrage League a precursor to the LWV-VA. Plans are being made for events at the Virginia Commonwealth University Campus on November 17, 19, 20. We will launch our book *Virginia Women & The Voter 1909-2009* at the reception. More details will come in the fall voter. Keep the dates open.

We are also working to finalize the plans for the Gubernatorial debate. Currently the Republican candidate has proposed ten debates including ours on October 12. The Democratic candidate verbally agreed to our debate during the primaries but is still negotiating the schedule. We will keep you up to date.

The Residency Task Force set up by the State Board of Election is set to finish it work in July. A draft of the proposed rules was on the SBE website. All local Presidents were advised that members could comment as individuals on this matter. We are seeking clarity and uniformity in the registration policy for all voters.

The workshops will again be held in August this year, on the 29th in Charlottesville. More information and a registration form are included in this newsletter. We hope you will make plans to join us and encourage others in your League especially newer members to attend.

Cheers,

Olga

Unless identified all articles are written by President Olga Hernandez formatted by Doris Tillman.

Virginia Election Law Study

LWV-VA State Convention in May voted to study/update our position on Virginia Election Law which will be a two year study. It has been many years since our position has been updated and with technology changes moving at a fast pace we need to determine if our positions are in sync with today's technology. Our goal will be to ensure all qualified residents in Virginia will be able to register, vote easily and have each vote counted.

The study will include review of:

1. Release time from work to vote
2. Absentee Voting
 - a. No excuse
 - b. Overseas voters
 - c. Internet voting
3. Voting equipment certified by Commonwealth of Virginia
 - a. Voting equipment used by each locality
4. Voter Registration
 - a. ID issues
 - b. Registration issues
 - c. Domicile/ abode issues
5. Election Officers
 - a. Training
 - b. Hours
6. Sources of Funding
 - a. State mandates
 - b. Federal mandates
7. Powers/authority of State Board of Elections

The link for our position in full can be accessed on the member's web site:

<http://members.lwv-va.org/LWVdoc.html>

The link to Virginia Election Code is:

www.law.justia.com/virginia/codes/toc2402000/toc2402000.html

Any League members interested in being part of this study group either as an active member, resource person or would like updates of the meetings please contact:

Betsy Mayr, Study Chair

studychair@lwv-va.org

703-777-9425 (h)

703-624-3924 (c)

LWV-VA Convention Wrap

The LWV of the Fairfax Area were wonderful host to our state convention. We would have loved to see more members attending but we had a great time. Fairfax County Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Sharon Bulova, welcomed the plenary. A workshop on leadership, presented by our LWVUS liaison Marcia Merrins, was very informative. We amended the bylaws to allow for annual instead of biennial budgets, the use of electronic technology to meet, and to clarify some language.

As part of our celebration we had a display of the photos of 25 of the 27 former LWV-VA Presidents. Many were compiled from their descendents and archives throughout Virginia. Attendees loved seeing their former leaders back to 1920. The photos will be part of the 100th anniversary book of the Equal Suffrage League a precursor to the LWV-VA.

We elected or re-elected officers and voted to do a review and update of our Election Law positions, Betsy Mayr has agreed to chair the committee. Bonnie Franklin and Eileen Williams managed a silent auction that raised \$675 net for the state League. We even had a visit from a suffragist, Mrs. Walker as entertainment at our evening banquet. Everyone had a wonderful time.

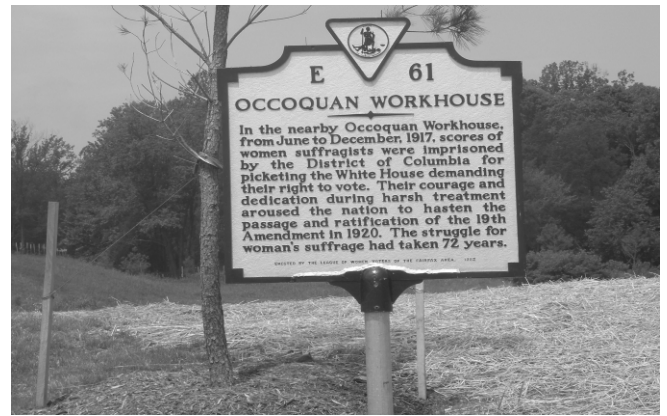
The evaluation forms were reviewed and tallied, the breakdown of responses are posted on the member's only website. We are taking steps to comply with the directions to the board that were expressed. The LWV-VA Summer workshops will attempt to fulfill a request to have more information on the use of technology.

It is important that the local Leaders attend state events such as workshops, Pre-session, League Lobby Day in Richmond, Convention and Council. We go to lots of planning to provide training and speakers to inform you and help you do your work. We hope to see many of you at the August 29 workshops in Charlottesville.

Will you attend Council in Lynchburg

Do make plans to attend the spring LWV-VA Council which will be hosted by the Lynchburg League. We need to know your thoughts on whether you would be willing to attend for two days, or keep it to one day of business and training workshops.

Your feed back is important!



Historical Marker placed at the workhouse location in Fairfax County

Turning Point Suffragist Memorial

Jane Barker

A fundraising campaign has been launched by the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to build a memorial to suffragists who in 1917 were the first picketers at the White House and were arrested and taken to the Occoquan Workhouse in Lorton, VA. The abusive treatment the women received while incarcerated served as a turning point in the battle to win women the right to vote. The memorial will be located in Occoquan Regional Park, across the street from where the women were held. It is hoped that the first phase of the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial will be in place by next year, the 90th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

A Turning Point Suffragist Memorial speaker's bureau has recently been established, so if you would like to book a speaker and hear more about the history of the suffragists and the Memorial, please email:

turningpoint@suffragistmemorial.org. There is also a newly created Web site with additional background material: www.suffragistmemorial.org.

State Tax Free Day

Virginia will have a tax free weekend, for school supplies and it may be a good time for local Leagues to stock up on supplies. Plan for this opportunity on August 7-9, 2009.

See link.

<http://www.tax.virginia.gov/site.cfm?alias=STHoliday>



**Connie M. Houston
1946-2009**

On June 28th former LWV-VA President Connie M. Houston passed away unexpectedly. She apparently collapsed while home alone, her beautiful pregnant, only daughter found her. On July 3rd her family held a memorial service where family, friends and community leaders spoke about her work. Many local League members attended, especially those from Northern Virginia. The League was asked to say a few words regarding her work. I was honored to represent all of you. Condolences were given to her daughter Ashlie and husband Jim. The family has asked that contributions in her honor be sent to her home League in Fairfax at 4026 Hummer Road, Annandale VA 22003.

As we worked to compile the 100th anniversary book of the suffrage work in Virginia I asked all the former Presidents to write something regarding their experiences as state President. Connie came thru delivering the following text. I share with you her report in her own words regarding her service from 1997 to 2001.

After four years as President of the Fairfax Area League and two years on the LWV-VA Board, I became the state League president in July of 1997. I've been reviewing my old files and copies of The Virginia Voter – yes, I'm sure some of you are not surprised that I have not thrown too much away – and find that there were many interesting challenges and accomplishments during my term (s) as president.

One of the challenges I remember most during my four years as state president was relocating the office, files, equipment, etc. from Waynesboro to Richmond. The decision to have a Richmond office, and not one where the president resided, was the result of “direction to the board” at state convention. It was nice to have a presence in Richmond and convenient for attending legislative sessions, chairing the Women’s Roundtable, conducted weekly during the session, and generally work of a state League.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia has traditionally held fall workshops, provided a number of publications for local Leagues, as well as the public, sponsored a pre-session Women’s Roundtable, held League Day in Richmond and state council and conventions. We also held regional “Rap Sessions” with local Leagues and established a web site. Carrying out the League’s education and advocacy efforts and activities required a considerable amount of thought, planning and work, not to mention money, which we were thankfully successful in raising.

Observing the legislative process up-close and in-person was both a learning experience and a real treat, especially when legislation, such as that requested by the League, makes it through the process and actually becomes law. One example was legislation that allows each local electoral board to authorize the use of split shifts for officers of election on election day in one or more precincts. It has taken some time, but the original intent - to enlarge the pool of available workers, making it easier for you and others in communities throughout Virginia to work on election day – is finally seeing the light of day! Other memorable pieces of legislation included our opposition to the “right to hunt and fish” amendment to the Virginia Constitution, and our support for improving the implementation and expansion of the Children’s Health Insurance program. We played a major role in the passage and/or defeat of many bills concerning anti-choice, election laws, health care/mental health services, gun control, the Freedom of Information Act, lottery revenues and trash.

Although the legislative process is not perfect and even though change is never easy, it is inevitable. The League did not just watch from the sidelines, it participated in the process, one that we endeavored to improve where and whenever possible. It seems we continue to work on campaign finance/election laws, the environment, gun control, education, and transportation – almost always League priorities.

The League’s focus is building participation in government and influencing public policy. It’s difficult to measure our impact on the one (building participation) and it can sometimes take years to show the results of the other (influencing public policy), but for me, it was great fun to try and I am grateful to have met and worked with so many wonderful people along the way.

League of Women Voters – US!

Robbie Davis, Chair LWVUS Nominating Committee

That’s the theme of the 2008-2010 LWVUS Nominating Committee. It means that the leadership of the LWV is *us* – League members just like you and me who are committed to insuring the continued success of our organization. The goals of this Nominating Committee are to promote that idea and to build a slate for 2010-2012 that reflects the values, concerns, and diversity of Leagues large and small across the country.

What can you do to help the Nominating Committee insure that the LWV leadership is *us*? Your most important contribution will be to act as our eyes and ears in the leadership search. We can’t personally recruit everywhere so we’re relying on members like you. Please make us aware of leaders in your area and nominate them for positions on the LWVUS Board or Nominating Committee. You can even nominate yourself!

The postmark deadline for nominations is September 30, 2009. A hard copy nomination form and an on-line form will be available on the lww.org website soon.

For more information you can join the Nominating Committee discussion list on the LWVUS web site or email us at

nominatingcommittee@lww.org .

A nominee recommendation form can be found at: <http://www.lww.org/Nominate>

We look forward to hearing from you!

State Board of Elections News

The State Board of Elections (SBE) is committed to educating Virginians about the election process. With this commitment in mind, the State Board of Elections has created a Twitter account to inform the public about important deadlines, events and other information. See for yourself at [http://twitter.com/VirginiaSBE!](http://twitter.com/VirginiaSBE)

Also, the Virginia State Board of Elections moved to new location. They can now be found in the Washington Building at 1100 Bank St. in Richmond, VA. The new zip code is 23219.

Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) Project

Lynn Gordon, Vice President. LWV-VA

In June, LWV-VA was one of 13 states to accept a \$1000 grant to help us participate in the LWVUS Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project. PAVP focuses on the following areas, particularly with regard to the elderly, lower income and minorities:

- Oppose photo ID and documentary proof of citizenship
- Improve administration of statewide database systems
- Guard against undue restrictions on voter registration drives
- Improve polling place management
- Improve poll worker training and strengthening poll workers

A part of this project will involve webinars prepared by LWVUS, some of which we hope to offer to you. Additionally, we will be making use of a software program, Cap Wiz, in which to send out action alerts on these issues, as well as others. If you have an interest in any of these issue areas and might be interested in participating in the webinars or other forms of grassroots advocacy, please contact Lynn Gordon at membership@lww-va.org.

Donations & PayPal Option

A few more donations have come our way since our report last spring. We again thank all members for your generosity.

The best news is that future donations to support our work can now be made via our website www.LWV-VA.org through PayPal with a credit card. Once you click on the PayPal icon the system will walk you through the steps. You will also get an email receipt whether you donate to the Operating Fund or the Education Fund. Remember only Ed Fund donations are tax deductible. Thanks to your generosity we are able to continue our work.

Thanks to Therese Martin and Sheryl Wolfe who set up this system to make it easier for members and the public who wish to contribute. The following are the names of donors since our last newsletter: Sheryl Wolfe

Rona Ackerman	Laura Anthony
Helen Blackwood	Amy & Leo Burgett
Therese Martin	Kay B. Pollock
Deloris Pourchet	Dorothy Nieweg

Join the Conversation with LWV Members Across the Nation

Kim Lewandowski,

Co-President, LWV - South Hampton Roads

The LWV of the United States' website is a wealth of information on League activities and events. It's also a place where you can discuss topics of interest with other League members throughout the country. LWVUS sponsors discussion lists on topics including issue-related lists like Civil Liberties, Climate Change and Health Care, and League-related lists like Development, League Leaders, Membership and Outreach, Nominating Committee, and Voters Service. Any interested member can join any of these lists.

To join a League discussion list, go to the website www.lwv.org. Then click on "For Members." Scroll down the page and you will see "Join the Conversation." Click on the link for "Join a new list or manage your account". If you are already registered, then just log in with your user ID and password. If you are not registered, do the registration for new members. If you have problems with this, contact membership@lwv-va.org.

HINT: As with all sites, write down your user ID and password somewhere convenient so you don't forget it in case you don't come to the site again for a while.

If you are not yet registered, you will probably have to wait for an email telling you that you have been "accepted." This is generally almost immediate.

After that, return to <https://member.lwv.org/Login.asp> and log in; you will see a list of all different topics for which the League sponsors a discussion list. Click the checkbox(es) for the ones you're interested in, and then click "Submit Changes" at the bottom of the page. The list(s) you have chosen may also have to accept you via email. Then you are ready to write a posting OR respond to others.

You can also choose to receive discussion list emails as individual messages or in a digest form, where you receive one message per day containing all the messages sent that day.

Join the conversation!

LWVUS Council Goes Virtual

Lynn Gordon, Vice President LWV-VA

This year on June 13 Vice Presidents Lynn Gordon and Anne Sterling represented the LWV-VA at the first ever LWVUS Virtual Council. The decision to hold it in this manner was made largely due to the current recession we are experiencing in the United States. As a result of holding it virtually viewing parties were able to be set up in some states so more League members than ever before were able to experience an LWVUS Council. We were treated to an advocacy briefing, LWVUS President's state of the League address, and an interview with U.S. Senator Kay Hagan of North Carolina, all of which were taped beforehand. Other aspects of Council such as approving the operating fund budget for 2009-2010 and a limited discussion based on the final report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Resolutions were done live.

Despite the advantages of it being more economical and available to more members of League, it was obvious that there are kinks still to be worked out before this is attempted again for LWVUS Council. Further, not having the usual interaction and networking that takes place between League leaders at LWVUS Convention and Council during alternating years were lacking. If you are interested in viewing pieces of Council you may do so by going to the 'For Members' section of the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org.

Middle Peninsula Members at Large Unit Disbands

I sadly report that the members of the Middle Peninsula Members at Large unit under the leadership of Katie Thompson have voted to disband as of June 30. We welcome all their members to remain as Leaguers without a unit in the LWV-VA.

LWVUS Encourages Local League Participation on Census Count

Check out the LWVUS web site at www.lwv.org

Your Email Address: The Key to Being an Informed League Member!

In order to effectively communicate not only within the organization, but also with those outside the League that we want to educate and involve in our activities – we need to be able to operate with what technology offers us! And so, more and more Leagues are conveying important information via electronic means. From local Voters to legislative action alerts, from Program Planning materials to Board reports! And why not? It's quick, inexpensive, timely and helps information be easily transferred to others!

In order not to be left out of important information streams, we are encouraging two things:

1. Members share their email address with the League and keep it current in the national database, and
2. Leagues are mindful and prudent about how much email is sent each month to our members so as not to wear out our welcome!

For example, LWVUS does not sell or trade member email addresses! We also send one email each month with our online newsletter the LeagueE-Voice to all members with email addresses. LWVUS also sends occasional national action alerts to those on our grassroots lobby list and leaders receive a regularly timed update once a week. Email is also easily deleted if you don't want to read it.

But if you don't receive it – you may miss out on important League materials!

Be sure the League has your email address!

Individual members can add their own email address to the national database through the national website, www.lwv.org and then go to "For Members" and then "Update Your Information". Or your League can also update your information or add your email address to the records. Be sure to let your League know you want to receive electronic information and give them your email address!

Here are some basic Email Etiquette tips:

- Be concise and to the point, avoid long sentences
- Answer all questions, and pre-empt further questions
- Use proper spelling, grammar & punctuation
- Make it personal
- Use templates for frequently used responses
- Do not attach unnecessary files
- Do not overuse the high priority option
- Do not write in CAPITALS (it looks like you're YELLING)
- Do not overuse Reply to All
- Use a meaningful subject line
- Use active instead of passive language
- Keep your language gender neutral
- Don't reply to spam

Election of LWV-VA Board at 2009 Convention At the 2009 Convention we elected or re-elected officers. Shown: Karen Cronin, Molly McClenon, Therese Martin, Anne Sterling, Olga Hernandez (President), Sherry Zachry, Sue Worden and Lynn Gordon. Not Shown: Lynn Johnson and Sue Lewis.



Photo by Doris Tillman



League of Women Voters of Virginia Summer Workshops

Saturday, August 29, 2009 9:00 a.m. — 4:15 p.m.

Holiday Inn University & Conference Center, 1901 Emmet Street, Charlottesville

We urge you to join us for a day of League training. The LWV-VA provides this training & networking opportunity to help you grow your League. You will leave with information, handouts and a sense of what is happening in League and how it can help you do your work and grow the League.

9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Registration, Coffee and Conversation

PROGRAM

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Welcome and meeting details

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. **Membership:** After the Ask the Follow-up

11:15 *Break*

11:30 p.m. **Lunch Speaker: R. Marc Johnson**
Assistant Director of the Sorenson Institute

The Sorenson Institute and What’s Happening in Virginia Politics
til -1:30 Lunch: Choose your “Interest” table for seating & networking
[Tables will be set up for various League Interest groups where you can network with others working on the same subject.]

1:30 *Break*

1:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m. **Technology Tools:** What’s Out There and How Can We Use It
Social Networking platforms:
Blogs, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Video use

3:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m. Regroup with the LWV-VA board for open questions

Directions: For more directions go to www.mapquest.com or get a map from Yahoo! The Hotel is on highway 29

LWV-VA WORKSHOP Reservation Form

Cost: \$25 includes lunch, no refunds for non attendance, no partial discounts

RSVP needed for food arrangements & material preparations

Reservations & money due by, Friday, August 21, 2009

Please make your check payable to **LWV-VA**, the state League does not cover meal costs.

Mail to: LWV-VA, P.O. Box 621, Centreville, VA 20122-0621. Please print clearly

Name: _____ Local League: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Meal Choice: Vegetarian salad _____ Chicken plate _____ Beef plate _____

Membership in League of Women Voters

Reminder: For all MALs (Members at Large) units and unaffiliated statewide MAL members, it is time to renew your membership. The fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th each year. If you have questions about membership status, please contact your local League membership chair.

Join: If you are not a member of the League of Women Voters and would like to join. Please visit our website at www.LWV-VA.org and select **JOIN**. Our membership form is available by clicking the “Join Now” icon.

Contribute: The LWV of Virginia appreciates the donations of members and nonmembers. Your contributions will allow us to do more to inform voters and advocate for our positions. For donations to be tax deductible they must be made to the “LWV-VA Education Fund”, those funds can only be used for educational purposes. Thank you for including the League in your charitable donations. Donations may be paid via our website through PayPal or by sending your checks to:

LWV-VA, P.O. Box 621, Centreville, VA 20122-0621.

I want to support the important work of the League of Women Voters of Virginia. Enclosed is my contribution. Only contributions to the LWV-VA Education Fund are tax deductible.

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Everyone Wins with a Gift Annuity Rate as High as 9.5 Percent!

With certificates of deposit and money market accounts averaging low rates of return, a League of Women Voters Education Fund charitable gift annuity may help you achieve your personal and financial goals, while providing needed support for the League's education and advocacy programs. Contact the League today, at 202-263-1355 or plannedgiving@lww.org, to create a charitable gift annuity and lock in attractive rates that will secure a lifetime of favorable fixed payments for you and your loved ones. Depending on your age at the time the gift annuity is established, you can receive as much as 9.5 percent annually, while ensuring the future of the League's work.