



Highlights: LWV-VA 37th Annual Convention Is Action-Packed



Saturday, 3:15: “Redistricting: What it is. Why it is needed. How you can help.”

LWV-VA Program Director Linda Rice has provided the main theme for the convention, as stated above. She has rounded up a panel of speakers designed to help us understand the issues, how they fit into a larger context, and what Leaguers need to know about being even more effective advocates.

Rice and Lois Page, LWV-VA Voter Coordinator, have also assembled a “Tool Kit for Redistricting Reform” which will be given to all attendees. The kit will contain a series of articles, maps, and talking points designed to be used to advocate on the local level, where many feel is the best hope for reform.

Panelists include the following:



David L. Bailey, whose legislative directory, *Virginia Capitol Connections*, is the directory used on Capitol Square and throughout the Commonwealth. Twenty years ago he created *Virginia Capitol Connections Quarterly Magazine*, and it flourishes as a nonpartisan vehicle that helps inform and educate the public. His

Election Night News has provided statewide coverage of General Assembly elections for more than a decade. In 2009 he created *This Week in Richmond*, a weekly Virginia public affairs TV show filmed at the Capitol for Blue Ridge Public Television. *This Week in Richmond* is now virtually statewide – shown on four Virginia PBS stations.

Ellen Buchman is Vice-President for Field Operations for the Leadership Conference, “the nations premier civil and human rights coalition.” The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights Field Department (the field team) provides grassroots consultation, advocacy coordination, support, and

assistance to national, state, and local organizations regarding field campaigns around important civil and human rights issues. The team is based in Washington, D.C., with a satellite office in Atlanta, Georgia.

Nationally, the field team convenes and provides field outreach and guidance to the coalition’s more than 200 national civil and human rights organizations on a broad range of issues. With that focus, the field team provides field outreach and advocacy, and public education campaign guidance, on a broad range of issues.

The Education Fund arm of the organization offers a tool kit for advocacy. “Our goal is to provide you with the basic structure and strategies needed to plan and carry out an effective grassroots public education or advocacy campaign.”

Nick Mueller is an attorney in northern Virginia who specializes in election law, including redistricting law. He is a graduate of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio and the William & Mary School of Law in Williamsburg, Virginia. While at William and Mary he drew the winning map in

Second Call For the 37th Annual LWV-VA Convention
May 29-31, 2015
**Holiday Inn - University Area
Charlottesville, Virginia**

the 2011 Virginia College and University Redistricting Competition. After law school, he served as a law fellow at the National Education Association and has since consulted with organizations advocating for redistricting reform.

Saturday TBA: Secretary of the Commonwealth, Levar Stoney or a one of his staff members will participate with us in a discussion on the Restoration of Felon Rights.

Saturday, 2:30 p.m.: Presentation by Peggy Appler, LWVUS Board Member and liaison to our Virginia League. Peggy plans to update us on what is on the front burner on the national level.

Saturday, TBA.: Launch of LWV-VA Leadership Institute

LWV-VA 1st VP Sue Lewis introduced the concept of a Leadership Institute, an in-depth learning experience on all facets of the League, at the last State Board meeting in March. She subsequently agreed to be in charge of launching this initiative by serving on the Board for the next two years as its director.

The purpose of the Institute is to identify and mentor new leaders to serve in various positions of the local or state League. The current plan is to hold the Institute on 3 different Saturdays, spread out through the year, at LWV-VA headquarters in Richmond. The goal will be to invite 12-15 sponsored and accepted applicants who would arrive in Richmond the night before and gather for dinner and networking.

The target topics include board administration, membership, position support, and voter service. Each component would have a group project connected with it.

Sue expects to hold a special **pass-the-hat fundraiser** during the banquet Saturday to help fund the project. Each applicant will pay a \$49 application fee which can be paid by the applicant or a sponsoring League. More details will be forthcoming during the banquet.

Saturday, 8:00 p.m. Introduction and special recognition for Rebecca Young-Marquardt, administrator of the Virginia Gwathmey Young Memorial Fund which has financed a number of state League initiatives over the years, including the General Assembly Legislative Directory. Rebecca and her physician husband Mark are founders of Volunteer Med Partners in Ecuador but have worked in the field of public health in many parts of the world.

Saturday, 8:15 p.m.: Keynote speaker on the subject of Hydraulic Fracturing or “fracking” which is being considered for a program study for the next two years. Speaker details are being worked out as we go to press. A separate Constant Contact notice will update this information shortly.

Saturday, 9:30 p.m./and Sunday, 8:00 a.m.: Caucuses on subjects of interest: Convention planners have already received requests for caucuses on gun safety, redistricting, and fracking. Other may be announced.

Program Issues to Come Before the Convention

Several important program issues will come before this year’s LWV-VA 37th Annual Convention.

Attendees are being asked to concur on the following proposal for a policy update, as submitted by the Fairfax Area Board of Directors:

1. Adoption of a concurrence “in support of removing the barriers to employment for persons with criminal records” at the convention will provide both the Virginia LWV and its member local Leagues the opportunity to support “Ban the Box” and similar proposals in the future. Some Leagues may already be quite familiar with this issue through their participation in local re-entry councils and activities. Go to http://www.lwv-va.org/files/convention_2015_04_14_programissues_full_page.docx for a more complete background information on this issue.

2. We will also be asked to vote on the following program-related resolution.

Fairfax Area, on the heels of a series of studies and a public forum on firearms safety (studies and forum summary may be found at <http://www.lwv-va.org/education.html>) has submitted the following:

- “Whereas the League of Women Voters of the United States supports regulating firearms for consumer safety;
- Whereas studies show that the risk of homicide in a domestic violence situation increases by 500% when a firearm is present;
- Whereas Virginia laws lack key measures to help protect victims of domestic violence from firearm injury or death at the hands of their abusers;

- Whereas an analysis of publicly reported firearms deaths in the twelve months after the mass shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, showed that at least 100 children across the United States were killed in unintentional shootings and that 2/3 of these unintended deaths took place in a home or a vehicle that belonged to the victim's family most often with guns that were legally owned but not secured;
- Whereas analysis of school shootings in the 14 months since the mass shooting in Newtown, Connecticut perpetrated by minors and where the source of the firearm was known, showed that in 75 percent of the shootings the attacker obtained their guns from home, and
- Whereas research shows Child Access Prevention Laws are effective at reducing firearm deaths among children;
- Therefore, be it resolved that we the representatives of the League of Women Voters of Virginia assembled at the 2015 League of Women Voters of Virginia Convention call upon the board of the League of Women Voters of Virginia to advocate strongly for laws at the state level that more effectively prevent domestic abusers and stalkers from purchasing, accessing or possessing firearms and laws that require adults to bear the burden for the injury, death and damage that results when a child accesses an unsecured or improperly secured firearm.

3. Finally, the LWV-VA Board of Directors is asking for a vote on a **recommended new study on "Fracking"** which has been worded as follows by LWV Charlottesville:

The current LWVVA natural resource positions do not address recent developments in Virginia of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") and energy pipelines. Fracking affects health as well as natural resources. Fracking and pipeline effects go beyond the current LWVVA positions. LWV-VA recommends that it go forward as a new study under Natural Resources.

4. Note: Other program-related resolutions may yet be offered.



Transparency Virginia press conference on April 14 at the General Assembly, in the House Briefing Room. They presented their report on "Transparency in the Virginia Legislature" which can be viewed at <http://www.transparencyvirginia.wordpress.com> Anne Sterling, current chair of this new coalition, presides. LWV Members Ruth Twiggs, far left; Donna Granski, in light green; Pat Fishback, far left. In the audience were members from LWV Williamsburg Area, and LWV Fairfax Area. The new coalition released its final report on transparency at the General Assembly, which can be accessed on the LWV-VA website. (Photo by Mary Crutchfield)

State Board Of Elections Decertifies WinVote Voting Equipment

Richmond – The State Board of Elections (SBE) decertified the AVS WINVote equipment at its public meeting today. The WINVote system is currently used in 30 localities, totaling more than 560 precincts around the state. This decision was reached after careful review of the serious security concerns identified in this system, feedback from election officials across the Commonwealth, and public comments from Virginians, technology experts, and other stakeholders. Decertification means the WINVote system can no longer be used in elections in Virginia, effective immediately.

In response to the widely reported issues experienced by Virginians on Election Day in 2014, Governor McAuliffe called for an investigation into voting machine irregularities. SBE unanimously approved a proposal from the Commissioner of Elections to conduct the first comprehensive review undertaken of voting equipment used across the Commonwealth. The meeting was held shortly after serious security concerns associated with WINVote machines were uncovered by the Department during the ongoing review of voting equipment. The report and associated documents are available here: <http://elections.virginia.gov/webdocs/VotingEquipReport/> The League's comment letter submitted earlier can be viewed at http://lwv-va.org/files/voterservice_2014_03_01_leaguelwvotecomments_sterling.pdf



Preliminary Schedule at a Glance



Friday, May 29, 2015

1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. LWV-VA Board Meeting: Lewis and Clark Room

Saturday, May 30, 2015

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m. Breakfast

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. Convention Registration and Delegate check in

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Plenary Session: 9:30-12:30

12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Lunch on your own

2:30 p.m. -- 3:15 p.m. Message from LWVUS, Peggy Appler

3:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Tool Kit for Redistricting Reform: **What** is it, **Why** it is needed, and **How** you can help. (Panel discussion, toolkit overview)

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Reception, Cash Bar

7:00 p.m. – 9:15 p.m. Banquet - Speaker TBA

9:30 p.m. Caucuses

10:00 p.m. Resolutions deadline

Sunday, May 31, 2015

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Caucuses

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration and Delegate check in

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Closing Plenary Session



Registration Form

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF VIRGINIA
37th CONVENTION: May 29 – 31, 2015



**Holiday Inn University Area, 1901 Emmet Street, Charlottesville,
VA 23185**

CONVENTION HOTEL RESERVATION DEADLINE – <u>APRIL 24</u>	149.00
REGISTRATION - MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 22	\$80.00
BANQUET ONLY - MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 22	\$40.00

Theme: Tool Kit for Redistricting Reform:
What it is, Why it is needed, and How you can help.

Registration fee includes:

Saturday, May 30

- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 9:30 a.m. Opening Plenary Session
- 2:30 p.m. Presentation by Peggy Appler, LWVUS Board Member and our Liaison
- 3:15 p.m. Panel Presentation: Local League Tool Kit for Redistricting Reform
- 6:00 p.m. Saturday night Reception (cash bar), Banquet, & Speaker (TBA)
- 9:30 p.m. Caucuses following Banquet

Sunday, May 31

- 8:00 a.m. Caucuses
- 9:00 a.m. Closing Plenary Session

Hotel Room Reservations: *Deadline to receive special rate is April 24.* Rooms are \$149 per night plus taxes per night. Make reservation directly with hotel (888-737-3995) and ask for “**Group Code LWV.**”

Deadline for receiving convention registration is May 22.

- - - - -Tear off and Mail - - - - -

Name of Participant (Please Print): _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Attending As: Delegate ____; Non-voting League Member ____; Guest ____;

Name of Local League/Organization: _____

Banquet Entrée: Chicken Breast Florentine: ____; New York Strip: ____;
Vegetarian (Fettuccine Alfredo): ____; Gluten Free: ____.

Pay By Check: Amount enclosed: \$ _____ Check Number: # _____
Complete this form and mail it with your check made payable to LWV-VA to Elaine Head, Treasurer, 507 Monticello Lane, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Mail your check by postal service mail to be received by the deadlines noted above.

Pay By PAYPAL: To make your PayPal payment go to <http://lww-va.org/donate1.html> and click on “Donate to The General Fund” button. Indicate the amount and click to pay. In the block under “Add special instructions to the seller” indicate Convention Banquet and your choice of Entree. Click to make your payment. This amount is not tax deductible. Send this completed form by postal service mail to the Treasurer at address above.

Local League News . . .

LWV-SHR is partnering with Virginia Organizing on a project regarding climate change. College students are visiting poorer neighborhoods in Norfolk that are prone to flooding. They're encouraging residents to tell their personal experiences with flooding (AKA sea level rise) both at their doorstep and at an event Thursday evening. If you search Twitter you can follow along with #floodofvoices.

We are also assisting with voter registration. While this was already in the works, I'm now seeing it in the context of member recruitment, thanks to the Summit. I've attached a photo from the training I did for the students.

Carolyn Caywood, Reporter



FAIRFAX AREA hosted a Firearm Safety Forum in March which elicited a mention in Delegate Ken Plum's weekly newsletter and an interview of the two League committee members, Sidney Johnson and Ruth Hoffman, on a local public access TV show: "**Virginia Report on Comcast Channel 28.**" Tune in to Ken's weekly television program, *Virginia Report*, on Reston Comcast Channel 28 for public service programming (Verizon Channel 1981). Ken interviews state and local leaders who are making news by making a difference.

"Delegate Plum talks with about results of a recent study by the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) on «Firearms in Fairfax County.» This program on Firearm Safety can be seen to at: <https://vimeo.com/album/1650266/video/123415839> "*Virginia Report* is also available online at <https://vimeo.com/album/1650266> for viewing on your computer or iPad.

Other studies that have been done by the LWVFA can be found at <http://www.lwv-va.org/files/education.html>



James T. Frey, Crime Prevention Officer with the Fairfax County Police Department was one of the panelists at LWVFA's Gun Safety Forum. Officer Frey stressed the four firearms safety rules that he was drilled on when he joined the police department 27 years ago.

- Assume that the gun is loaded.
- Never point a gun at someone unless you want to kill them.
- Do not put your finger on the trigger until you are ready to fire the gun.
- Know your target and what is around it.

LWV-LC's Annual Meeting Features Speaker on the Environment

LWV Loudoun County's Annual Meeting April 25 will feature a speaker on "Birds, Bees, and Butterflies" with the subtitle "The State of Loudoun County's Environment."

Nicole Hamilton, executive director of Loudoun Wildlife conservancy, will address one of LWV-LC's major policy issues—the quality of Loudoun County's environment. The mission of the conservancy is to promote the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats throughout the county.

Ms. Hamilton's most recent accomplishment was the launching of the Loudoun Wildlife's Monarch butterfly campaign: "Bringing Back the Monarch, Keeping the Magic Alive."

State News in Brief . . .

PAVP: “Voting Before Election Day” Gets Wide Circulation

Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Coordinator Therese Martin as been sending out emails with the press release and W&M “Voting before Election Day” paper to many reporters over the past week or more. William and Mary’s Rebecca Green was asked to circulate it among “the field.” It was also called to the attention of the staff of the GA Privileges and Elections Committee and carried on ElectionLine.

Printed copies were left in the office for ad hoc use of Carol Noggle and Anne Sterling. Board members should be sure to pick one up. If members want one but won’t be getting to the office, contact Therese Martin.

League Asks U.S. Representatives and Senators to Cosponsor “FRACK Pack” Bills

The League signed on to [a letter](#) asking U.S. Senators and Representatives to cosponsor legislation that would help protect the environment and public health from the risks of oil and gas production including hydraulic fracturing. The set of bills is commonly referred to as the “Frack Pack.”

Virginia League Gains TPSM Donor Wall Status

The Board of Directors of Turning Point Suffragist Memorial pleased to announce that LWV-VA has qualified for Donor Wall status at the Memorial. Nineteen state League members have contributed a total of \$2,053, which takes them part way to the next donation level of \$5000. Congratulations!

Virginia joins the state Leagues of Colorado and Tennessee in reaching Donor Wall status. We urge each state to continue to seek the next level, so crucial to our reaching our campaign goal. Local Leagues may qualify separately for Donor Wall status. Details can be found at <http://www.suffragistmmorial.org>

Local League Presidents Summit Attendees Tell State Board Like It Is

Local League presidents and State Board members gathered in Richmond on March 12 for a summit meeting to exchange ideas and let the Board know help they need to carry out their responsibilities. This one-day meeting focused on the following categories: Communications, Administration, Membership, Leadership, Action/Advocacy and Voter

Service—all key elements of League efforts.

One League president remarked, “I feel like the Board really was interested in listening to our concerns and trying to help us.” Discussions were lively, positive and informative, especially when members related experiences their League faced.

Top concerns raised include:

1. Work with coalitions to bring about redistricting reform, eliminating gerrymandering
2. VOTE411 – continue to defray the costs, provide training, and publicity
3. Utilize software to notify constituents of targeted legislators on specific committees
4. Send out Action Alerts in a more timely fashion to maximize volume of mail on various issues
5. Attract young people (20-40 years) who are more issue oriented by going where the congregate
6. Develop instructional webinars to educate our members
7. Speed up the program planning and concurrence process, sharing studies done by other Leagues
8. Highlight our core competency in voter registration, voter rights, elections, democratic process and non-partisanship
9. Establish a system to train interested League members to track a particular issue they are passionate about

A detailed list of the concerns can be found on the League website at:



Pictured above is the display arranged by LWV-VA Legislative Coordinator Carol Noggle to publicize LWV for attendees at the Women’s Legislative Roundtable during the General Assembly Session this year. The photo on the table is Adele Goodman Clark -- the first President of LWV-VA who served from 1920-1926 and again 1929-1936.



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**Anne Sterling, President
 Ron and Lois Page, Editors**

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.

Membership in the League of Women Voters of Virginia

Join: If you are not a member of the League of Women Voters of Virginia but would like to become a member, please visit our website at www.LWV-VA.org and select JOIN. Our membership form is available by clicking the “Join Now” icon on the far right.

Contribute: The LWV of Virginia appreciates donations of members and non-members. Your contribution will allow us to do more to inform voters and advocate for our positions. To be tax-deductible, donate to the “LWV-VA Education Fund.” Education Fund money 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 c/o Elaine Head, 507 Monticello Lane, Blacksburg, VA 24060

Yes 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: _____

Reminder to Members: Please keep your contact information current! Please notify your membership chair or the state League when your email address or other contact information changes.