



State Board to Hold Workshops October 1 On L WVUS Consensus Issues

Your newly constituted LWV-VA Board, at its first meeting on July 15-16 voted to hold **Fall Workshops and dedicate them to helping us all become informed on the issues surrounding the two consensus decisions tha the L WVUS would like us to make this program year.** The two items that were approved in at the 2014 convention are an update of the positions they called Money in Politics and a study of the process of amending the US Constitution. Another study on redistricting is underway, which may lead to a decision on national wording for redistricting reform criteria.

Consequently, the board plans to invite you all to Richmond on **Thursday, October 1, with a possible time scheme of 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.** Location and speakers are being researched. Some excellent speakers have already been identified and are being considered. Location for meeting and luncheon will likely be in the state Capitol. We seek your patience while we sort this out and devise a reservation form.

The deadlines to get our consensus results to National are December 1 for the Amendment issues, February 1 for Money in Politics. We felt this might put a strain on local program directors and would like to help you with this process. Please consider not holding your consensus meetings until after this workshop.

This meeting is designed for all Leaguers plus interested members of the public

The planning committee for the workshops includes Frances Schutz, LWV-VA Program Director; Lynn Johnston, LWV-VA Arrangements Director; Sue Lewis, LVW-VA 1st Vice President; and Dianne Blais, and Lois Page, LWV-VA Co-presidents.

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Presidents' Message



It has been a wild ride so far but very fulfilling. Your new board is enthusiastic, creative and self-starting. Our retreat and board meeting in Staunton last month resulted in a pile of important decisions made and people coming forward to say they would help.

Among the decisions was the realization that we could be of help to local Leagues facing two major consensus meetings this League year by holding statewide workshops in Richmond. A committee stepped forward and is furiously working on getting the details to you shortly.

Charlie and Nancy Warren of the Montgomery County League, two people very knowledgeable about fundraising for non-profits, spent Wednesday evening with us, leading a session in which board members offered a number of ideas about how we might raise enough money to do more of what we want to do. The Warrens led us to think more about what it is we want to accomplish and how more funding would help us do that. We will address some of these ideas with you in upcoming months.

Meanwhile, we know you are all frantically busy finding ways to inform voters about all the crucial, but too often ignored local elections coming up. Please consider making the effort to learn how to use VOTE411 and to put it in place this fall. The state League is paying for it, but the locals must devise the questions and create an online invitation to participate. A how-to article is included in this Voter.

Thank you for the honor you have given to Dianne and myself. We are already immensely grateful that there are two of us.

Lois

The LWV is made up of volunteers (people that I so admire for giving of themselves) educating themselves and the public (education is so important!) so as to achieve the best government we can have (an elusive, but so worthwhile goal). I'm excited to be taking on co-presidency of this organization at the state level.

I'd like to brag a bit about the other co-president and her husband. Lois has made her house available for years for local monthly LWV meetings - sending out notices about these meetings in advance with an enticing description of what will be covered and sending out meeting summaries afterwards. She has been on the Fairfax board for years. She and I were program co-chairs together 10 years ago! While secretary of the Fairfax League, she and her husband, Ron, took over editing and getting out the Fairfax Voter. A few years ago both agreed to serve on the state board and over the past years, all LWV members in Va. (and legislators and potential members) have been receiving the *Virginia Voter* that they edit. Even though Lois has taken on the co-presidency, she and Ron are continuing with BOTH *Voters*! Ron also produces many LWVVA documents and oversees all communication including constant contact (tool used for simultaneous e-mails to all members), our great website, and Facebook.

I am so looking forward to serving with Lois and Ron and others on the state board. Together, all of us are working for a better tomorrow – with educated voters voting for good government.

Dianne

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The *Virginia VOTER* also is available to non-Virginia League members on our website.

Please e-mail address corrections to the office

League Members Are Encouraged to Find Ways to Participate in Upcoming Consensus Meetings

By Frances P. Schutz, Program Director, LWV-VA

Many Leaguers are aware that at the 2014 LWVUS convention, two studies were called for: Money in Politics [MIP], and the Constitutional Amendment [CA] process. Planning for these consensus meetings is crucial to our grassroots participation. There are many levels of participation you can take advantage of before the consensus meetings, depending on your level of interest. Contact your Local League President or Program Chair if you want to help.

You can also keep in mind that LWV-VA is planning on helping with these consensus issues by holding a Workshop on Oct. 1 in Richmond, complete with speakers and process assistance.

Webinar: Overview of MIP and Constitutional Amendment Studies

Chairs of the LWVUS Money in Politics Review and Constitutional Amendment Study Committees provided a webinar with general background on national studies and an orientation to the two current studies. Pat Donath, CA Chair, and Barbara Zia, MIP Chair, will answer your questions regarding timeline, materials and the study process. One can sign up to view the completed webinar if you missed the webinar on the July 29th contact Betsy Lawson at blawson@lww.org.

Key Structures of Democracy: Constitutional Amendment Study: Consensus Questions!

At its post-council 2015 meeting, the League Board approved the Constitutional Amendment study questions so that Leagues can begin to meet and discuss this all-important issue. The consensus questions are accompanied by short PRO and CON statements that will help League members consider their responses. Educational materials can be found at the Constitutional Amendment Study page and others will be posted in the coming weeks. Second, but no less important is the: **December 1, 2015: Consensus reports** (electronic) from local Leagues **due to LWVUS**.

Money in Politics Review

Here is a helpful resource, which contains links to other resources such as Meetings-in-a-Box mentioned below:

<http://forum.lww.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review> The study and consensus process will consider: (1) the rights of individuals and organizations, under the First Amendment, to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities; and (2) how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconciled with the interests set out in the current position **February 1, 2016: Consensus reports** (electronic) from local Leagues **due to LWVUS**.

MIP Meetings-in-a-Box

The Money in Politics (MIP) Review and Update Committee provides ready-to-use resources and strategies to help understand the current system of campaign finance regulation. These materials, which we call “Meetings-in-a-Box,” are available online and are designed for Leagues to use for member and community events. They are intended to engage members and the general citizenry on MIP issues as they are evidenced nationally and in states and communities. In addition, they will help prepare members for the LWV update of its campaign finance position. This update of the League’s position on campaign finance will get member understanding and agreement on the extent to which the League thinks that financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment.

MIP Review Google Group

Sign up to join the MIP Google Group which is replacing the Money in Politics Forum! If you would like to join the new group, click on the attached link and follow the instructions: <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/lww-money-in-politics>. Questions can be sent to MIPStudyChair@lww.org.

Fracking Study Committee Is Forming

At the state level, a new study committee is forming to consider the issues around Fracking, approved at the 2015 Convention. They will be meeting soon, to begin this two-year study, by refining the scope, determining how to proceed with research, and ultimately, to create study materials and consensus questions for local Leagues. This is an exciting time to be in League!

VOTE411 Uncovered!

By Maggi Luca, Carol Noggle, and Lois Page

[Ed. Note: Although VOTE411 has been around for several years now, many Virginia Leaguers still find it a mystery.]

According to the LWV website, VOTE411.org is a nationwide online network of electoral information that is made possible by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF). It is an innovative voter information resource that provides citizens across the country with nonpartisan educational information and addresses the issues foremost in the minds of American voters. Also available are early voting options, absentee ballot information and poll locations. The online voters' guides have candidate information and answers to locally-generated questions that can also be downloaded and sent to print media.

The process works something like this:

- 1) Leagues wishing to participate must sign up with LWVUS. An invoice is sent to the local League, but LWV-VA has agreed to cover the costs of any coverage requested by local Leagues. All local Leagues are already covered for candidates for their General Assembly races. Prince William Area, Richmond Area, and Fairfax Area Leagues have requested coverage for local races as well, and we have paid for that. We have heard of other local leagues who wish to be added. **Any local League that is willing to take on local races as well should let LWV-VA Voter Service Director Maggi Luca know by August 31.**
- 2) Local leagues will determine by going to the www.elections.virginia.gov who the candidates are for their area, at the very least their local candidates for the GA.
- 3) Send these candidates' names, contact information, office, and the questions you have decided to ask them, two are provided by the state Board to VOTE411.
- 4) Prepare a letter of invitation to participate. Include how many characters (not words) each candidate may have for each question and explain about the character limit and how to calculate it. Contact Carol Noggle cnogg@comcast.net for a sample letter to the candidates. Send this to VOTE 411
- 5) When the candidates receive your email invitation directly from VOTE411, they are told how to

respond. The message includes the questions and a link to VOTE411 where they enter everything -- name, bio, website URL, their headshot photo, and the answers to the questions. It also includes an email and phone number for any questions the candidate may have.

- 6) When the candidate responds you will see their response on the site. You will check the response and send another message to the candidate if something needs to be adjusted. We hope that all candidates will participate.
- 7) You can also send a reminder email to the candidates. When you are ready to go public with the guide online, you should notify the candidates first so that they can see what VOTE411 will look like for the public.
- 8) If your League has chosen to cover local races, you will need to agree on questions for those candidates as well and go through the same process.
- 9) Remember that you can download all this information to a Voters' Guide for print media. Downloading the Voter Guide is not hard -- once you know how to do it, of course. There is a widget for posting wherever you want -- including on Facebook. Help is a phone call away!
- 10) PUBLICIZE!! All this work is for nothing if no one uses it. And remember, younger voters are used to getting all their information online. And we want their attention.



Some ideas for publicizing:

1. Add a link to VOTE411 with directions for use to your Facebook page. Don't have a Facebook page? Someone will help you set one up. It's easy;
2. Charlottesville has persuaded the local bus company to donate a "crawl" (moving sign on the side of the bus) on Voter Registration Day advertising VOTE411;
3. Some communities have managed to acquire a VOTE411 banner across the main street;
4. Write letters to the Editor of local papers;
5. Put directions on your websites;
6. Mention it frequently at any candidate events (and while you are at it, ask people wanting more info to sign up for League emails);
7. Print up some business cards with VOTE411 address and your League name and website to hand out

- wherever you can;
8. Issue press releases;
 9. Make Public Service Announcements; and
 10. Use others of your own creation (send us your additional ideas).

Still needing answers? Help can be found by emailing Maggi Luca (mkluca@aol.com), Sue Worden (sueworden60@

gmail.com) or Sheila Iskra (siskra@aol.com), all Virginia Leaguers with experience. LWVUS recently hosted a webinar on VOTE411. If you would like to request a copy of the webinar, email Megan Brown (mbrown@lwv.org).

VOTE411 is the very best source of voting information for the public. There is nothing available that is better.

Newly Elected Board Holds First Meeting

Taking a break from its usual meeting in its Richmond office the Board retreated to Staunton, VA for the first gathering with the newly elected members. Time was well spent bringing new members up-to-date on the Board's activities, and getting acquainted with each other.

Taking care of business, your Board of Directors expanded the leadership team by making several appointments:

- Flo Marks as Director for Voter Coordination
- Olga Hernandez to Election Law & Administration Oversight (Off Board)
- Anne Sterling for Local League Outreach (oOf Board)
- Dianne Blais as liaison to LWVNCA
- Bill Thomas as Budget Committee Chair
- Sue Lewis and Linda Garvelink as Co-State Coordinators of Membership /Leadership Development Committee
- Carol Noggle as LWV-VA's representative to TransparencyVirginia

Other business addressed was to approving our nonpartisan policy with a minor revision, approving a memorandums of understanding with OneVirginia2021, and a partnership with The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association; approving the calendar for the year, and scheduling workshops for October 1, 2015. See related articles throughout this edition of the *Virginia VOTER*.

The League Clearinghouse: A Great Resource for Local Leagues

by Carolyn Caywood, Facebook Coordinator

The May 28 *League Update* called attention to the League Clearinghouse: “New studies adopted at your annual meeting? Jumpstart those new items by visiting [the League](#)

[Clearinghouse](#) - the great resource that features League studies in more than 50 subject areas. The Clearinghouse provides scope and focus of a topic, research methodology, sources consulted, information about positions, and consensus questions.

“Do you have studies, including those on local issues, completed? Post them to the Clearinghouse to benefit other Leagues. **Note:** the Clearinghouse accepts positions without their supporting studies, even as multi-position documents, if they are accompanied by a single submission form. The description section could have “Resulting Position:” and the position statement or a link to the position. Complete studies are preferred, and Leagues may add study documents at a later date. Share your studies! Share our strength!”

Personally, I have found the Clearinghouse site easy to use with multiple ways of searching. LWVSHR is studying Sea Level Rise / Climate Change Adaptation so I began with a search of the Clearinghouse along with a review of the national League positions. When I just now searched on “fracking” a list of twelve documents appeared – glossary, links, chemicals, a powerpoint, even consensus questions. I recommend the Clearinghouse along with the national positions as the first stop for any study.

How Do You Want to Receive the Virginia Voter?

As you may know, the majority of Virginia Leaguers receive a Constant Contact notice that the most recent Voter may be found at a certain location of our website—www.lwv-va.org. This is **Option One** and is the preferred one from an administrative point of view as it is the least costly. However, we have indications that only 30% of you actually follow this process. This is a lot of missed information.

Somewhere around 200 of you have opted out of receiving Constant Contact. Most of those people have **Option Two**, [mailing](#) you the Voter which we don't mind doing. BUT this means you also do not receive a lot of other information. You will not be

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League Issues: Recent Developments



Shankman with granddaughter

Shankman Speaks at Voting Rights Act Rally

LWV-VA Secretary Rebecca Shankman represented the League at a rally in Roanoke in late June urging Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-6th Congressional District VA) to schedule hearings on restoring some provisions to the Voting Rights Act. Rep. Goodlatte is chair of the House Judiciary Committee where the bills

have been languishing. A number of Leaguers attending joined other sponsoring organizations at the rally including the NAACP.

In her speech, Shankman stated that “It’s time for Congressional leaders, including my own congressman, Bob Goodlatte, to act on restoring the law and protecting the right to vote for all Americans.” [Click Here](#) to read the full text of her speech, and [Click Here](#) for a video of the event.

Letter Sent Urging Prison Census Change

Thanks considerably to the efforts of Karen Kimball (LWV Arlington), a letter to the Census Bureau has been approved by LWVUS and was sent in early July. The letter urges the Bureau to begin counting prisoners as living in the communities they come from as opposed to living at the prison locations, as is currently true.

The letter states that the current policy “has the effect of improperly inflating the true population of a county or state district.” This “effectively gives greater representation to people who happen to live in districts that contain prisoners.” ...”This results in an unfair diluted representation for residents of the district with no prisons.” [Click Here](#) to read the complete text of the letter.

League to Urge Governor to Set Up Commission for August Redistricting

In a recent phone conversation, Brian Cannon, OneVirginia2021’s Executive Director, urged the League to continue pushing for a non-partisan commission to handle the likely court-required changes in several Virginia voting districts. The Legislature will be called back in August

and he feels there is time to put together a non-partisan commission. Cannon feels the issue will likely go to the courts who will look for the simplest solution.

One suggestion: call back the commission that former Governor McDonnell created. Although their suggestions were ignored in 2011, they would be a good guidepost to work with. Another option would be to look at the student maps created in 2011 in a competition in which LWV-VA had a role. Gov. McAuliffe also has set up an Ethics Commission.

In any case, Cannon urged Leaguers to reach out to legislators, keep on top of what is being introduced, and watch for information about a possible “Telephone Town Hall,” during which people from all over the state could call in to a moderated session on redistricting information.

Gerrymandering Results In Dismal Turnouts

[Ed. Note: From the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, June 11, 2015] “Jeff Schapiro, the best political columnist in Virginia, unearthed a staggering statistic the other day: Out of 600 state elections since 2003, only 19 incumbents have been defeated. The figure testifies to the power of gerrymandering.

“A Thursday news story provided another staggering stat. With 140 seats in the General Assembly, Virginia could have seen as many as 280 major-party nomination contests. How many actually took place? Eighteen. And only half of those involved a challenge to an incumbent.

“Turnout, as usual, was dismal too: less than 8 percent of eligible voters.

“Those figures create a negative feedback loop. With so few voters going to the polls, party insiders find it easier to control the outcomes. Lawmakers draw districts designed to guarantee that seats don’t change hands. Noncompetitive districts dissuade challengers, leading to one-candidate races. With no real contests to speak of, most voters don’t waste their time going to the polls.

“Lawmakers could break the unhappy cycle if they had the integrity to draw competitive districts. Voters could break it if they had enough determination to beat the system. But legislators prefer things the way they are, and voters don’t see much real possibility of making things into what they could be. And so the sorry spectacle grinds ever on.”

Local Leagues Providing Important Services to Their Communities

LWVAR to Register Eligible High School Students to Vote

Starting in the fall, the Arlington League will be in charge of registering all eligible students in the County's high schools to vote. The Arlington Public Schools Superintendent wanted to systematize voter registration, and the League was selected to play the lead role. We have nearly 50 volunteers lined up for two sessions - tables outside high school cafeterias in the fall semester and presentations in every government class in the spring semester. We will be working with a new organization, Inspire Virginia, which recruits teams of high school students to lead voter registration and civic engagement projects.

LWVAR and Interfaith Council Push for Fair Redistricting

Activists and Advocates: On June 4 more than 70 hardy individuals gathered at George Mason University's Arlington campus to learn more about the issue of redistricting and ways to reform the current system that gives legislators the power to redraw district lines every 10 years—a system that leads to incredibly convoluted district boundaries, often drawn to ensure the reelection of those in office. Despite stormy weather, those who attended were treated to an excellent and engaging program presented by Sara Fitzgerald of the League of Women Voters and Brian Cannon of OneVirginia2021.

The Northern Virginia chapter of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy (www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org) collaborated with GMU's School of Policy, Government and International Affairs, the League of Women Voters (Falls Church and Arlington), and OneVirginia2021 to shed light on this most important and timely issue. Led by Dean Mark Rozell and Professor Frank Shafroth, the program focused on the need for a fair redistricting process that doesn't serve to discourage voters, thus leading to low voter turnout. To view a video of the program, visit GMU's website at <https://vimeo.com/130090321>.

Also in Arlington: SAVE THE DATE!
Thursday, September 10, 2015 – 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. – League Forum on Medicaid Expansion

What is the best solution for closing the coverage gap

for those several hundred thousand low-income Virginia residents who do not earn enough to afford health coverage and who are not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid? This will be the subject of our upcoming League Forum on Medicaid expansion and its importance to all of us. Featured speakers include informed community leaders who have much to share about this important question. Seating is limited. To attend this free event, please register by sending your RSVP to lwvarlingtonva@gmail.com

LWV Williamsburg Hosts Speakers on Legislative Issues, Mental Health, and Hunger

Senator John Miller, First Senatorial district, discussed the many legislative issues the General Assembly handled this year and some that were ignored. Amanda Johnston, Legislative Aide to Delegate Brenda Pogge - 96th District, focused on the General Assembly improvements in the mental health system. Eddie Oliver, program manager for *Virginia No Kid Hungry*, a part of the national program *Share Our Strength*, reported that 300,000 or one-sixth of Virginia children are food insecure and noted that the tools to end childhood hunger in our state are already available but underutilized. He stated that the Governor and First Lady have prioritized hunger as an economic issue and discussed aspects of the Governor's program. His speech could not have been timelier as our Board had just voted to approve a proposal to study child hunger in our local area. A second proposal to study the teaching of high school civics/citizenship in our local school divisions was also approved.

Loudoun Forges Ahead on VOTE 411

President Priscilla Godfrey announced that the League in Loudoun is preparing questions for candidates for 411 and reserving locations for four candidate fora this fall.

Washington County MAL Honors Karen Shaffer

Karen Shaffer was recognized at the League of Women Voters of Washington County, Member at Large Unit, annual meeting held in Abingdon on March 9. The local League honored Shaffer for her tireless work in making Washington County a better place to live. "Her concern for the environment, her work in grassroots organizing, and her professionalism in working with Washington County boards and committees" were cited in her recognition.



Shaffer (on Left) receives plaque from Co-chair Merry Jennings

She has been very active in the “anti-fracking” movement since April of 2011, when she read in the newspaper that gas drilling using hydraulic fracturing was coming to Washington County. The area proposed was where her ancestors settled and her extended family live, and included land adjacent to her own home. Her dedication and hard work have earned her leadership in this anti-fracking group. Board of Supervisors Chairman Phillip McCall said that he

appreciates Shaffer because of her ability to effectively work with the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

Her work and activism have raised public awareness and created a community of citizens better educated about fracking. Due to the public outcry and community involvement, currently there are no investors interested in drilling in Washington County, and all previous gas leases have expired.

Shaffer was born in Bristol and went to Virginia High School. She majored in journalism at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Following graduation, she worked in publishing and advertising in New York City.

After moving back to the area in 1991, she worked as a publicist for the William King Museum of Art, freelance for various local artists, and Green Man Press in Abingdon. She also served as a board member at Appalachian Independence Center, an organization that works to empower people that have physical disabilities, which grew out of her remarkable recovery following a serious automobile accident. “I am very grateful and quite honored for this acknowledgment bestowed by the League,” said Shaffer.

Coalition News

TransparencyVirginia

Carol Noggle was reappointed to be our representative to the newly formed organization that is seeking to open up the legislative process to more public scrutiny. The Prince William Times featured Carol and her work with the group. It was entitled “Keeping Tabs: Gainesville resident promotes transparency in General Assembly.” The article begins with these words: “Keeping tabs on committee is the Virginia state legislature isn’t just for journalists, bill sponsors and caucus whips. It’s a job for any given citizen who wants to pursue it.” [Click Here](#) to read the entire article.

OneVirginia2021

State Board voted in July to become a partner under certain conditions with this coalition seeking to reform redistricting in Virginia. Because the group has endorsed a few candidates in a recent primary, League leaders who were serving on OneVirginia’s main Board of Directors had to step down because of our non-partisan policy. However, the board is allowing League leaders to be part of lower-profile advisory and regional boards. [Click Here](#) to read the proposed agreement document.

Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association

State Board also voted in July to become a partner with the association, originally founded with the help of LWV Fairfax Area. Virginia Leaguers have already donated enough in the League’s name to be included on the Donor Wall of the future memorial, located on the site of the imprisonment and torture of the “silent sentinels” who picketed the White House for support of the 19th amendment in 1917. LWVUS has also signed on recently as a partner. Visit their website at www.suffragistmemorial.org

Virginia Civic Engagement Table

LWV-VA has reaffirmed its partnership with VCET, a statewide network committed to the goal of ensuring that every Virginian is able to fully participate in our democracy. VCET is a model for coordination among nonpartisan 501c3 advocacy, community, and grassroots organizations. We focus on engaging and empowering historically underrepresented communities so that we can build the power needed to eliminate barriers to civic participation and guarantee that policy-making is guided by the public interest, not the special interests. It is a subset of State Voices, a national network of permanent, nonpartisan, state-based coalitions working to create a more accessible, inclusive, and representative democracy.

One of the most important things many of our partners do is

work to get their members to engage with elected officials to advocate for the issues they care about. It can be tough to provide the support, encouragement and training to make that happen. VCET is ready to help with our second annual Advocacy Training. Our first event last year got rave reviews from attendees and we're working to make this year even better. The training will happen August 29 and 30 in Richmond. Please share this registration link and the information with your members <http://bit.ly/1CGKQXi>

Visibility: the Key to Increasing Membership

By Linda Garvelink, LWV-VA Membership Director

July is often a less-busy time for Local Leagues. Leagues regroup after their annual meetings, install new board members and work on developing strategies and plans for get-out-the-vote, voter registration and programs, which we often kick-off in August or September. However, effective membership recruitment requires that Local Leagues be consistently and constantly visible in their communities throughout the year.

The LWW Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) program suggests a number of activities to ensure continued visibility throughout the summer months. Activities can include issuing a press release or scheduling an event related 1) to anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention on July 19-20, 1848; 2) August 26, which is women's Equality Day and/or 3) to the 95th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters

Seneca Falls Convention: In July 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Martha C. Wright, Mary Ann McClintock and Jane Hunt organized a convention "to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman" publicly. The convention was organized in just 5 days! Publicity was word-of-mouth. From July 19-20, 1848, about 300 people, including 40 men, met at Seneca Falls, New York for what has come to be known as the Women's Rights Convention in the United States. One-hundred of the Convention participants signed a Declaration of Rights and Sentiments, which in part said: *The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpation on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.* For the specifics of the Declaration of Rights and Sentiments, go to http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage1848/a/seneca_declar.htm or other Internet sites

Women's Equality Day, August 26: On August 26, 1920, Women's Right to Vote became an official part of the Constitution of the United States. This should not be the only day to commemorate the courageous and determined women who contributed their lives to gender equality, but also the day we stand up and do something! To paraphrase the old cigarette ad: We've come a long way, baby! But, we also have a long way to go to assure full equality for women, not only in the U.S., but throughout the world. Additionally, August 26 is a great opportunity to reinforce the importance for all women to exercise their right to vote.

League of Women Voters' 95th Anniversary: If your League has not already issued a press release or held an event related to celebration of LWV's 95th Anniversary, it's not too late. The League's formation is worthy of a year-long celebration.

Visibility: In addition to formal activities such as a press release or an event, we can use more individual and personal efforts to promote League membership. The efforts of our foremothers indicate just how powerful "word-of-mouth" can be to incite action – 300 conference attendees in only 5 days with no extensive publicity. All Local Leagues would be thrilled with this kind of response.

"Word-of-Mouth" is an excellent and easy technique for any and all members to use. Talk about the League, our mission, our efforts to get out the vote and the opportunity for comradery with women and men who value and work to enhance voting rights for all. Share your commitment and love of the League. That more than any other activity will bring in new members!

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participating, for example, in any Action Alerts or receive any late breaking news that would not be in the Voter anyway. This is a lot of missed information and participation. You may not be aware that you may stay in Constant Contact AND receive the *Voter* by mail. Just send a request to pagegolfer@cox.net.

Option Three is now being offered because the new *Voter* Coordinator, Flo Marks, is willing to email you the *Voter* as an attachment. Flo will be asking everyone soon if they would like this option but you can make her job easier by letting her know now at ffmarks@aol.com. Only by viewing the *Voter* on line will you be able to click on links in the text.

Please tune in to the League by reading the *Voter*. The mission of the League is informed voters, and our members are the front line in this mission.

What Is GREB And Why It's Important To Elections.

By Olga Hernandez, Election Law
& Administration Oversight

application of advances in technology utilized for
voter registration and election administration.

During the 2014 General Assembly (GA) session, HJ22 and HJ24 proposed a study of general registrar (GR) duties and compensation. The House GA Rules Committee suggested the request be referred to the Virginia State Board of Elections (SBE). At the May 14, 2014 SBE meeting, the [Virginia Electoral Board Association](#) (VEBA) and the Voter Registrars Association of Virginia (VRAV), presented a resolution requesting a study related to the duties, responsibilities and compensation of GRs and Electoral Boards (EBs). The SBE unanimously approved the study and established a workgroup to conduct it.

The study group is comprised of VEBA members, VRA members, SBE members and co-chaired by former Lt. Governor, John Hager and a former Secretary of the SBE, Jean Jenson (she's also a League member). The group is tasked with reviewing the management of elections specifically in 10 areas of study.

1. Analysis of voter registration data of the 133 localities, to include the associated costs at both the local and state levels.
2. Gather data from the four-year election cycle in order to identify workloads and costs associated with each type of election.
3. Examine the duties of GRs and Electoral Board members required by the Code of Virginia and Virginia Administrative Code (VAC).
4. Compare the statutory and regulatory duties with the duties currently undertaken by the GRs and EBs.
5. Identify those duties statutorily belonging to the EBs that are routinely undertaken by the GRs.
6. Evaluate the effects on local offices of increases and shifts in the overall number of registered voters in the Commonwealth.
7. Analyze the impact on the workload of the GRs and EBs caused by changes in which votes are cast on and preceding Election Day.
8. Review the educational requirements, qualifications and training of GRs and EBs, and compensation schedules associated with those offices.
9. Identify efficiencies that may be achieved by uniform

10. Seek out "best practices" within the Commonwealth and, beyond that, offer improvements in the elections process.

By November of 2014 the group came back with a resolution asking the SBE to recommend legislation to the Governor and the GA to clarify some points in the law. Section 24.2 of the code of Virginia pertains to all items having to do with elections. The last revision was accomplished in 1992. The resulting legislation was HB1433 and SB1092 establishing the title Director of Elections for General Registrar's who carry out Electoral Board duties. The bills transferred statutory duties of absentee voting and campaign finance from the EBs to GRs as surveys identified this was already mostly the practice. The legislation did not address the request to establish compensation at the rate of the local Treasurer.

The workgroup has found the issues in managing elections were greater than could be addressed by the original deadline of December 2014. They asked for and were granted an extension, the group continues its research and has issued an interim 14 page report, the first draft is posted on the ELECT website <http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/Media/GREBWorkgroup/20150630DraftInterimReport.pdf>

Data analysis found that actual practices differ from the outlined code responsibilities. Thus the need for code clarification and information to all involved in appointments. The group developed a comprehensive job description for EBs to give the political parties information on what the job entails as they select appointees for nomination by the court. The court will also be given this document as guidance to allow for better understanding of what EBs are responsible for.

A review of the prior four-year cycle found that changes in Federal [ie the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and MOVE Act (Military and Overseas Empowerment Act)] and Commonwealth laws [photo ID, absentee voting requirements, technology changes, etc.] have added a burden to state and local offices while the GA has cut the financial support and pushed more mandates to the localities. Remember last year, the Governor recommended funding for equipment, but the GA basically said that was a local responsibility and did not include it in the budget.

Virginia's population has increased 23 % since 1996 yet registered voters have increased 72%. Some due to population growth, but also to NVRA and an easing in the ability to register. (*Now if they would all come out to vote!*) This adds to the work of election offices at the same time they are receiving less state support. Technology issues abound as election equipment is ever more complex and some is failing and must be replaced, plus the list of maintenance requirements is constant.

GREB is also looking at training of GRs and EBs and incentives for them to take training as well as how it can be accomplished perhaps using technology.

Best practices and efficiencies and achieving uniformity

are a work in progress. There are still 16 localities in Virginia that have only a part time GR most of the year. The needs of small jurisdictions differ greatly from that of more populated areas. Yet they must still comply with all laws and regulations. Better use of technology and staff training may be the answer as budgets are tight and working processes evolve.

Most of the information for this article was taken from the ELECT website, the Interim report and personal observation at the meetings. Stay tuned. Therese Martin and I have been attending all GREB and most SBE meetings as we follow the progress. We expect proposed legislation in 2016 to come from this study.

Women's Equality Day Will Be Celebrated August 26!

By Frances Schutz, LWV-VA Program Director

Leaguers are a proud part of the flowing stream of activism for women's rights, We celebrate our history briefly August 26, before moving forward with the continuing struggle for equality for all in our society. We are clear that even if the Equal Rights Amendment had been passed, there remain many instances of inequity for women, for minorities everywhere, and for those who remain disenfranchised.

During the seventy-two years between the first major women's rights conference at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, and the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, thousands of people participated in marches through major cities, wrote editorials and pamphlets, gave speeches all over the nation, lobbied political organizations, picketed the White House, and held demonstrations with the goal of achieving voting rights for women. These were not women sitting on their hands hoping for a fully functional democracy.

The women's suffrage amendment was introduced for the first time to the United States Congress on January 10, 1878. Finally in June 1919 the amendment received approval from both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Over the following year the suffragists spent their time lobbying states in order to have the amendment ratified by the required two-thirds of the states. On August 24, Tennessee, the final state needed for ratification, signed the approval by one vote. The vote belonged to Harry Burn, who heeded the words of his mother when she urged him to vote yes on suffrage. The U.S. Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby signed the amendment into law on August 26, 1920.

In 1971, Representative Bella Abzug (D-NY) introduced a bill that passed, designating August 26th of each year as Women's Equality Day. Part of the bill reads that Women's Equality Day is a symbol of women's continued fight for equal rights and that the United States commends and supports them.

[Primary source, National Museum of Women's History]

Taking Another Look: Virginia's Compliance With National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)

By Therese Martin, PAVP Coordinator

The "Eureka Moment" came in early February when I visited my local public assistance office to check out the availability of voter registration forms and to see if any staff might be available to discuss why clients seem to be uninterested in registering to vote. I was trying to determine why the voter registration statistics reported on the Virginia Department of Elections web site showed such a nosedive in applications reported from public assistance agencies over the past two years. [It had taken the League's preparation of a summary report of monthly totals to see the steep decrease.]

The moment came when I saw the poster reading: "Don't wait in line – Apply online!" I knew from our previous paper in 2012 that the source of the statistics from public assistance agencies were paper voter registration forms completed by clients in Virginia's Department of Social Services (DSS) offices and periodically placed and taken in specially-coded envelopes to general registrars. [Click Here](#) to read the full report.



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Dianne Blais & Lois Page, Co-Presidents
Ron Page, Editor

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.

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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 Pat Hurst, 12 Georgetown Green, Charlottesville, VA 22901

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.

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