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- Ari Berman, speaker at final banquet

Virginia Delegation to LWVUS Convention 2016
Gathers Valuable League Information, Insights

Twenty-four attentive Virginia Leaguers took notes, offered examples, asked questions and generally spent 4 action-packed days at the mid June nation-wide convention. Summaries of various break-out sessions will be shared in future issues, but thanks to the note taking skills of Linda Garvelink of the Va. Board and Falls Church, and Martha Cooper, also of Falls Church, a detailed account, called a “Delegates’ Diary,” of the major speakers and business dealt with at the Plenary Sessions has been placed on the state website.
extended version of the summaries below can be found in the linked full-version "Diary" at the day and time indicated.

We give you just a taste of what some of the major addresses included:

**Jennifer Lawless, Director, Women & Politics Institute, American University** spoke on Engaging Millennials in our Elections. In a book she wrote with another professor called *Running From Office*, she found that fewer than 1 in 5 people trust members of Congress and 89% of young people say they will never run for office. She feels the political dysfunction of our time will have political consequences for future generations. (*Read more*: page 1, Friday morning.)

**Amanda Taub, Vox News and The New York Times**: Understanding American Authoritarianism: “What on earth is going on?” in this election cycle. Ms. Taub addressed the “Rise of American Authoritarianism.” There has been a slow change in the electorate toward acceptance of, and even desire for, an authoritarian candidate. This happens, historically, when the status quo is threatened; “sick candidates,” who appeal to out-groups, can thrive and rise. (*Read more*: page 1, Friday morning.)

A panel on "Protecting the Right to Vote and Expanding the Electorate” included Kristen Clark, president, National Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, who pointed out racist and sexist voting policies such as in Texas where gun permits can be used as a voter ID, but only 6 percent of African-Americans and 24 percent of women have gun permits. Arturo Vargas, Executive Director of National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) feels that Latino voters have been facing voting challenges recently when they are likely to make a difference, but their registration rates are painfully low. Christine Chen, Executive Director of Asian Pacific Islanders American Vote (APIAVote) says her constituents are the fastest growing population in the U.S., but with the lowest registration rates. Like Latinos, they are not being targeted in registration drives. (*Read more*: page 2, Friday morning.)

**Executive Director Wylecia Wiggs Harris** stressed the need for LWV to CHANGE to meet current needs. We must evolve and redefine our future. We have to embrace change and engagement, we must diversify our membership and reach rising voters. We must adopt communication methods that have been shaped by the new generation. We must use technology! (*Read more*: page 2, Friday morning.)

**Peter Overby, Correspondent for National Public Radio**, speaking on “Money in Politics,” pointed out that Super Pacs are not supposed to be coordinated with the candidate’s campaign – but they are. It’s very coincidental how similar Super Pac and campaign ads and activities are considered “no coordination.” Super Pacs enabled “minor” candidates to stay in 2016 race longer. Supreme Court, in Citizens United decision did not see that corruption and influence would come with Independent Expenditures. Justice Kennedy, who wrote the assent, said that corporations should disclose political expenditures
so investors could determine the value of the company’s contributions to candidates to their investment in the company. (Read more: page 5, Friday afternoon.)

Joe Goldman, President of the Democracy Fund, addressed "Our Democracy – Complex Systems and Major Forces at Play in 2016." The Democracy Fund was established by the founder of EBay; he has invested $30 million to date. The purpose is to “take back our Republic,” the public needs to regain faith in our public institutions/system. The Democracy Fund provides funding to a wide variety of organizations, even CATO, when the purpose is to enlighten fairly. (Read more: page 6, Saturday Morning.)

Address by New President Chris Carson. Next two years will be time of “engagement.” LWVUS will work to improve the redistricting process and continue the fight to halt the influence of Big Money in Politics, including helping state & local Leagues propose and push for limits on campaign financing at state and local levels. We will continue to work to protect the election process. LWVUS will continue to help state & local Leagues develop new leaders and expand memberships through the Membership & Leadership Development (MLD) program. (Read more: page 8, Sunday morning.)

Ari Berman, speaker at final banquet, spoke on his latest book Give Us the Ballot, the Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America. He tells the story primarily of what has happened with voting rights since 1965, hard upon the passage of the Civil Rights Act that attempted to protect the rights of minorities. Those rights have been under attack every since. Especially telling was his tracing of the record of Chief Justice Roberts, who worked in opposition to expanded voting rights from early in his career. (This talk was not summarized in the Diary. Transcripts of convention speeches are reportedly on the LWVUS website—somewhere. Interested parties should read this arresting book.)
League of Women Voters Teams Up with National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice To Offer Voter Registration to Qualifying Former Felons

(Arlington, Virginia) -- “In my old life,” said Virginian Terry Garrett, who previously served time for shoplifting, “I was just here. I didn’t feel as if I was part of the country, a citizen. Whoever people voted in, I didn’t get to have a say. Today I know that I am an important part of society, and every vote counts.” Now “I am a citizen and part of this country. Everyone should keep that right. No matter what.”

Under Virginia Governor McAuliffe’s recent executive orders, around 6,000 former felons in Virginia like Terry Garrett have had their voting rights restored. In order to qualify, they must have completed their terms of incarceration and been released from supervised probation or parole. Governor McAuliffe wants them “back in society, feeling good about [themselves], voting, getting a job, [and] paying taxes.”

On behalf of individuals like Terry, the League of Women Voters of Arlington and the NOVA chapter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice are teaming up to provide voter registration to individuals who qualify under Governor McAuliffe’s executive orders. This effort will provide them the opportunity to review their individual eligibility and to register to vote online.
Voter Registration Event Details:
Date: July 23, 2016
Time: 1:00 pm to 5:00pm
Location: Macedonia Baptist Church
3412 South 22nd Street, Arlington, VA

For more information about this event, contact League member, Karen Kimball, karen_kimball@net.acc.net or 703-536-5991.

Other NOVA Leaguers should feel free to use the flyer below to help publicize this event to other organizations.
Restoration of Rights and Voter Registration Event
Have you lost your right to Vote?
JOIN US to find out if you have had your rights restored.
SIGN UP to register to vote.
Saturday, July 23rd
1:00 to 5:00pm
Macedonia Baptist Church
3412 South 22nd Street
Arlington, Virginia 22204
- Open to ANYONE who has completed their parole or probation supervision
- Bring your Social Security Number
- Need a Photo ID? Get an ID right away from a representative of the Arlington County Voter Registrar’s Office
- Get your questions answered by a representative of the Virginia Restoration of Rights Office

Sponsored by: The Northern Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, The League of Women Voters of Arlington, and Macedonia Baptist Church of Arlington

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In This Issue:

- Voter Registration Process Enters 21st Century
- New Virginia Voter Registration Form Launched
- Rally for Voting Rights
- Updated Information About Voter Registration Training

The Virginia Voter Express
Issue No. 16-13   July 9, 2016

Virginia Voter Registration Process Enters the 21st Century!

Governor Terry McAuliffe announced on July 7 an exciting new innovation from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Department of Elections enabling customers to apply electronically to register to vote at DMV's 74 customer service centers and five mobile offices throughout the Commonwealth.

Virginians have been able to apply to register to vote at DMV since 1996, and a majority of Virginians who apply to register to vote or change their addresses do so through DMV transactions. Each year, DMV submits more than 500,000 paper voter registration applications to the Department of Elections.

“This new innovation is a great example of government using technology to serve taxpayers better and make it easier to participate in our elections,” said Governor McAuliffe, speaking at the announcement. “By streamlining the voter application
process at the DMV we will help Virginians to get in and out of customer service centers faster and give DMV employees more time to focus on customers, rather than processing stacks of paper applications. I want to thank the teams at the Virginia DMV and the Department of Elections who worked hard to enhance the experience they offer taxpayers while conserving government resources in the process.” - See more at: https://governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/newsarticle?articleId=15818#sthash.FNpsU71c.dpuf

Edgardo Cortes, Commissioner, Va. Dept of Elections, summarized the changes as follows:

1. **Online DMV transactions will be integrated with ELECT’s online registration system.** This will allow for full electronic transactions online for DMV customers and eliminate the requirement to print and mail a paper voter registration form when updating your license online.

2. **In-person DMV transactions will be paperless and voter registration information will be transferred electronically.** Voters will use touchscreens in place at all DMV customer service windows (currently DMV and ELECT are testing the system at three locations) to respond to registration questions and complete required information. This will allow for the elimination of most paper registrations originating from DMV, improve the accuracy of data entry, decrease processing times for registrations, and reduce the transfer time of completed forms from DMV to local registration offices.

3. **Currently registered voters will have a streamlined address update process.** To make registration more easily portable for voters, DMV and ELECT will have a real-time data connection allowing the DMV to determine if a customer is already registered to vote. Currently registered voters will simply have to confirm their new address information to complete their online or in-person transaction, minimizing the time it takes to complete the process and increasing the accuracy of the registration list through updated information.

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**New Virginia Voter Registration Form Launched**
The Virginia Department of Elections rolled out a new registration form on July 1, both the paper and online version. The department considers the new from “simpler and more straightforward.” The old form, however, is still usable. To access the new form, go to http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/Forms/VoterForms/VoterRegistrationApplication.pdf

ELECT also now has a video on how to use the online voter registration form. Stay tuned for how you can access it.

Rally for Voting Rights

On April 22, 2016, Governor McAuliffe restored the voting rights of over 200,000 individuals who served their time and completed supervised probation and parole. Now, Governor McAuliffe’s actions are being challenged. Join the coalition members, listed below and headed by the New Virginia Majority, in Richmond on Tuesday, July 19th, 2016 as we rally in support of voting rights. For further details, copy and paste the following URL into your browser.

https://www.facebook.com/events/1040800109335972/

After the rally, there will be voter registration, redistricting and election protection workshops from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Copy and paste the following URL to register for the workshops. http://bit.ly/VADemocracyForum
Updated Information About Voter Registration Training

Garry Ellis, Voter Registration Coordinator for the Virginia Department of Elections, has announced that the expiration date of all 3rd Party Voter Registration Training Certifications for training received between
July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 has been extended to July 31, 2016. Revised voter registration training materials and certification information will be made available in July 2016 reflecting the changes recently adopted by the State Board of Elections to simplify the voter registration application.

All individuals and groups that plan to obtain 25 or more voter registration applications during the August 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017-time period must obtain a certification from the Department prior to obtaining these voter registration applications from the Department of Elections or a local voter registration office.

For additional information, please contact Garry Ellis garry.ellis@elections.virginia.gov

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Our mailing address is:
501 East Franklin Street, Suite 624, Richmond, VA 23219
804-521-4171
lwv-va.org

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In This Issue:

- VCET offers Advocacy Training
- WEC Schedules Justice Summit
- Comments on Census Bureau Decision Due August 1

View this email in your browser

The Virginia Voter Express

Issue No. 16-14    July 17, 2016

Coalition Partners Sponsoring Two Events:
VCET–Advocacy Training and WEC–Justice Discussions

VCET is offering Virginia Advocacy Training on July 23rd in Richmond and August 20th in Hampton Roads. The two days will cover different material; on the first the basics of advocacy and the government process, with a tour of the General Assembly building and a Q&A during a lobbyist and legislature panel. On the second day; messaging and using our stories and social media as effective tools in our advocacy. You can join for one or both days. This year VCET will have Spanish language translators and hand-out materials available. This training is free and open to the public so spread the word to your members, co-workers and community members! You can sign up here. If you have questions or want to volunteer to help, contact LaNoral Thomas at lanoral.thomas@seiuva.org. This training will give you the tools you need to help make the change you want to see in Virginia!

Comments on Census Bureau Decision Due August 1

Yesterday LWVUS approved the LWV-VA letter that will be sent to the Chief of the Population Division of the Census Bureau asking the Bureau to change its "usual residence" rules so that prisoners are counted at their pre-arrest address. The deadline for public comments is August 1st. All the public comments a year ago did not sway the CB to make a change. Now they are taking comments on their decision.


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Department of Elections Announces In-Person Voter Registration in the Richmond Area

News Release: July 15, 2016

Richmond, VA – The Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) is conducting eight (8) in-person voter registration training sessions that are open to the public. The Code of Virginia requires individuals and groups obtaining 25 or more Virginia voter registration applications to receive training provided by ELECT. All organizations and individuals conducting voter registration activity are encouraged to receive training. The training provides valuable information regarding the responsibilities of voter registration drives and critical information to ensure voter registration drives are properly assisting voters in completing the registration process.

In addition to in-person training, interested individuals can complete the training online at www.elections.virginia.gov/training. Please contact Mr. Garry Ellis by telephone at (804) 864-8910 or email at Garry.Ellis@Elections.Virginia.Gov to register for in-person training, to schedule training for your organization, or for other questions related to training for voter registration drives.

For More Information:
Gary Ellis (804) 864-8910
Gary.Ellis@Elections.Virginia.Gov
July 23, 2016: Sponsored by Clovia “Ms. Community” Lawrence, Rolling for Freedom-R4F & Radio One/One Vote Campaign

6:30pm – 8:00pm
World Overcomers Family Church
4908 Creedmore St.
Richmond, Virginia 23231

July 28, 2016: Sponsored by Henrico Co Voter Registration

6:30pm – 8:00pm
Eastern Henrico Recreational Center
1440 N Laburnum Ave.
Richmond, Virginia 23223

July 30, 2016 Sponsored by the Richmond Metro League of Women Voters

10:00am – 12:00pm
Glen Allen Library
10501 Staples Mill Rd.
Glen Allen, Virginia 23060

July 30, 2016: Sponsored by Caroline County Voter Registration

2:00pm – 4:00pm
Caroline Community Center
17202 Richmond Turnpike
Milford, Virginia 22514

Aug. 13, 2016: Sponsored by Baptist General Convention of Virginia

9:00am – 11:00am
1214 West Graham Road
Richmond, Virginia 23220

Sept. 8, 2016: Sponsored by Richmond Alumni Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.

7:30pm – 9:00pm
J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College—Parham Road Campus, Burnette Hall, Room 178
1651 E Parham Rd.
Richmond, Virginia 23228
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Department of Elections to Conduct In-person Voter Registration Training in Newport News

Richmond, VA – The Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) is conducting eight (8) in-person voter registration training sessions that are open to the public. The Code of Virginia requires individuals and groups obtaining 25 or more Virginia voter registration applications to receive training provided by ELECT. All organizations and individuals conducting voter registration activity are encouraged to receive training. The training provides valuable information regarding the responsibilities of voter registration drives and critical information to ensure voter registration drives are properly assisting voters in completing the registration process.

In addition to in-person training, interested individuals can complete the training online at www.elections.virginia.gov/training. Please contact Mr. Garry Ellis by telephone at (804) 864-8910 or email at Garry.Ellis@Elections.Virginia.Gov to register for in-person training, to schedule training for your organization, or for other questions related to training for voter registration drives.
Aug. 20, 2016: Sponsored by Newport News Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

11:30am – 1:00pm
Newport News Police Department Community Road
9710 Jefferson Ave.
Newport News, Virginia 23605

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Celebrate Women’s Equality Day at Gunston Hall

The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association and Gunston Hall, home of George Mason, jointly are pleased to invite you the Program will include a video and lecture about suffragist martyr Inez Milholland Boissevain as well as how the Constitution and Bill of Rights affected women during the Suffragist Movement and today.

Nationally renowned historian, Edith Mayo, Curator Emeritus in Political and Women’s History at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, will be presenting. Please join us and learn more about the suffragist movement, George Mason and the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial project. Light refreshments will be served and the program will begin promptly at 7 pm.

WHEN
Friday, August 26, 2016 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM (EDT)

WHERE
Gunston Hall - 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton, VA 22079

COST   $10.00
Save the Date
Saturday, September 17, 2016
LWV-VA Fall Workshops

Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 1793 Richmond Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22911.

Plan to spend a day in Charlottesville--on an away-football-weekend for UVA—with League members from all over the state -- on Saturday, September 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. The reason: sharing of valuable League ideas and strategies to deal with this very important election year.

We are planning a day filled with information on topics of interest to League members. This year, we focus on Voter Service for the day, though other topics will be included. Tentative plans are for issue workshop topics to include:

- Help with Vote411.org issues
- Update on the Gun Safety Task Force
- Sharing of the Fracking Study Committee's information in preparation for consensus consideration
- Further training in the use of electronic media – especially focused on local League webmasters

9:30 a.m.  Welcome! Sign in and collect information for the workshop sites for the afternoon
10:00 a.m.  Plenary Session – Briefings on:
VCET Offers Second Round of Advocacy Training

From Virginia Civic Engagement Tables comes this announcement of the second round of advocacy training on August 20th in Norfolk at the Residence Inn (1590 N Military Hwy, Norfolk) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. They describe it this way: “We will be talking messaging and using our stories and social media as effective tools in our advocacy. We hope that folks can join us. You can sign up here!” It is free.

State Legislative Coordinator Carol Noggle, who attended the first training day reported, “The training Saturday in Richmond was well worth the trip just to network with other advocacy groups, hear David Broder (SEIU) describe the budget process (he would be great at a League workshop), hear the legislators reaffirm that personal hand-written letters have more influence than email blasts (that may not be from their constituents). The legislators continue to affirm that they just do not hear from very many of their constituents. We practiced making the 30 second "power" speech, but not the 3 minute or 10 minute speech.”

League Asked to Help to Make Women's Memorial a Reality

Virginia is a state with a rich historical background, and women have made significant contributions that have helped shape the Commonwealth. The upcoming Virginia Women’s Monument to be built in Richmond on Capitol Square is a historical tribute that is not only giving Virginians a sense of pride, but is also providing education and engagement to the visitors of Capitol Square.

The monument will feature twelve life-sized bronze statues of significant Virginia women positioned around an elliptical plaza, who together represent more than 400 years of history. The specific names and biographies of the honorable women to be depicted in the monument are available online at http://womensmonumentcom.virginia.gov/. Another prominent feature of the monument is the Wall of Honor, a glass panel etched with the names of other noteworthy women throughout Virginia’s history. Names are now being accepted for consideration of inclusion on the glass panel.

The Women’s Monument Commission needs your organization's help and support to make this
Fredricksburg MAL Approved By State Board

At its July 19 board meeting, the Fredericksburg Area applicant group was granted status as a MAL unit number VA135. “This is an exciting moment for us,” stated Cathie Braman, the group’s convener. “Being such a big election year, our members are excited about being able to play a major role in voter service in our area.” The group already has 15 members and is spreading the word by inviting others to join. Most of their effort is focused on getting trained to register voters, but plan to move ahead with other service in the future.

New Fredricksburg LWV members shown in the above photo (Back Row L-R:) Bill Tucker, Voter Services Co-Chair; LWV-VA Co-President Lois Page, Debbie Combest, Secretary/Treasurer; Cathie Fisher Braman, Chair; LWV-VA Co-President Dianne Blais, Lena Gonzalez Berrios, Membership Co-Chair; Front Row: Diane Shea, Susan Hadley, Brenda Hooper, Membership Co-Chair.