



The League of Women Voters - Richmond Metro Area

The Leaguer

December 2023 - Vol. 103 No. 1

This issue of The Leaguer has information to help you prepare for a busy season of advocacy, with the Virginia General Assembly set to convene on January 10. Be inspired by our accomplishments this fall; prepare for our Advocacy Planning Meeting on January 20; and learn about plans for the Women's Legislative Round Tables in January and February.



A Message from the Co-Presidents

As we approach the close of 2023, this newsletter provides a review of League activities this year and a look forward to 2024. A full list of the League's many accomplishments in 2023 is included.

We would like to say a special thank you to the Voter Service Committee and all the Leaguers who volunteered for voter registration and information activities, including candidate forums, Call 12, fact sheets and Vote411. A new effort this year was supporting the new VCU Votes class to get out the student vote. We hope this will become an annual activity.

Since the League's activity never stops, in the new year we will be learning and advocating at the Virginia General Assembly, doing our annual advocacy program planning meeting in January, and continuing with all of our issue and administrative committees.

The Nominating Committee will begin their work seeking officer and board candidates, so please consider recommending yourself or someone else to the committee.

The National League is moving forward with "Transformation" and we will be watching for changes in funding and responsibilities of the various levels of the League.

Many thanks to our talented and dedicated Board members for their ideas, time, and efforts. And to every Leaguer for your participation and support.

The Board continues to meet monthly by Zoom and all League members are welcome to join the meetings as observers or to bring issues to the Board.

Wishing you a happy holiday season and all the best in 2024 as the League continues *Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy*.

--- Evelyn Glazier and Anna Mason



Voter Registration table at J Sargeant Reynolds CC on Constitution Day, Sept. 18

What We've Accomplished

From the start of the membership year through December, our League has been very active in our core areas of voter service, advocacy program, and membership activities. Let's celebrate our successes!

Voter Service

- Participated in online Voter Registration Training by the Department of Elections.
- Registered voters and provided voting and election information at 13 locations in the Richmond Metro Area, including colleges, retirement communities, festivals, naturalization ceremonies, and candidate forums.
- Continued our Civics Education Program with Meadowbrook High School and expanded it to Midlothian High School.
- Created and distributed Voter Fact Sheets and redistricting information for the November general election.
- Collected candidate information for Vote411 and publicized this program widely.
- Staffed phones at NBC Call12 to answer voters' questions prior to the November election.
- Assisted with a forum for Hanover County Board of Supervisors and organized a General Assembly candidate meet-and-greet in Henrico County, prior to the November election.
- Partnered with AAUW, Delta Sigma Theta (Richmond Alumnae Chapter), NAACP, RevUP VA, Hanover County Chamber of Commerce, and three high schools.



Leaguers answer phones for Call 12 on Election Day, November 7

Advocacy

- Participated in a sendoff for the VoteEquality bus to Seneca Falls for the ERA Centennial
- Partnered with VPEP (Virginia Public Education Partners) and LWV-VA to present an Education Forum, *Raise your Hand for Healthy School Environments*.
- Partnered with UpVote VA and BigMoneyOutVA in a *Democracy is Brewing* event at the Richmond Public Library.
- Viewed the presentation by LWV-Washington State on their position regarding the decline of local newspapers.

Membership and Engagement

- Welcomed new members with orientation sessions, held virtually.
- Communicated regularly with our members via the bi-weekly Mini-Leaguer.
- Provided timely civic information to our members and the public on our website.
- Held a "LWV-RMA Refresh" meeting for all members in September with a focus on Voter Service activities for the November election.
- Initiated local advocacy units starting with members in Henrico and Goochland counties.
- Organized an outing that rode the PULSE bus from Willow Lawn to the Library of Virginia to view the *200 Years – 200 Stories* exhibit, followed by lunch in Scott's Addition.
- Conducted public forums on manufactured housing and on homelessness in the region.
- Observed electoral board meetings in four localities.

- Held an online discussion of the book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, by Heather McGhee
- Hosted a post-election social event and a holiday party for our members.



January 20 - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Meadowdale Library

4301 Meadowdale Blvd - North Chesterfield, VA 23234

Are you ready to meet some of your fellow Richmond Metro Leaguers, have a say in what actions our local League takes, and get more involved? If the answer is “yes”, then mark your calendar for Saturday, January 20th from 10:00 to 2:00 at Meadowdale Library for our in-person Advocacy Planning Workshop. Coffee, snacks and lunch will be provided. Be ready to participate in the action and have fun!

Here's a glimpse of what we'll do together at this interactive session:

- Look at 2023 advocacy accomplishments and update or create new goals;
- Review the processes for developing positions and for advocating based on those positions;
- Briefly visit LWV-US positions to suggest updates or new studies:
<https://bit.ly/3RhDtQe> ;
- Review the LWV-RMA positions: <https://bit.ly/47BkkP0> and recommend changes or additions based on member interest;
- Plan and prioritize advocacy actions or activities and events for 2024-2025; and
- Discuss the LWV of Washington State's recently completed study on the decline of local newspapers that will be up for national concurrence at the 2024 LWVUS Convention. Local leagues will be asked to weigh in soon. The study can be found online at - <https://bit.ly/49ZEjbM>.

More information to come in early January. Looking forward to seeing many of you on January 20th!

--- Sam Florer, VP – Program

[Register Now](#)

LWV-Virginia Pre-Session Forum

The state League presented a Pre-Session forum on December 6 on Zoom. This annual meeting kicks off our advocacy efforts at the VA General Assembly by educating members about the legislative priorities of the League and its partner organizations.

The first speaker, Commissioner of Elections Susan Beals, noted that the shortfall in number of election officers has become very large, and she welcomed efforts of the League to recruit more poll workers. Secretary of Finance, Stephen Cummings, outlined the governor's priorities for this session. LWV-VA Advocacy Chair Denise Harrington summarized the state League's legislative priorities and highlighted the work of LWV-VA's issue groups.

More than twenty representatives from non-partisan advocacy organizations each spoke briefly about the issues and bills that they will follow in this session. The agenda and "handouts" for Pre-Session can be viewed at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ri7PbsZZ9Umrzozl8CUKPvknIjZ6X8SA>



LWV-VA invites Leaguers to attend the Women's Legislative Roundtables (WLRTs) on Wednesday mornings during this year's long session of the General Assembly, from January 10, 2024 until March 6, 2024. You may attend via Zoom or in person, from 8:30 – 9:30 AM. The in-person segments will take place in the new Virginia General Assembly Building, 201 North 9th Street, 7th Floor North Meeting Room.

We will have speakers, often legislators, to address our priority advocacy topics. Here is the schedule:

- Jan. 10: Voting and Elections
- Jan. 17: Gun Violence
- Jan. 24: Education
- Jan. 31: Child Care
- Feb. 14: Housing
- Feb. 21: Environment
- Feb. 28: Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice
- March 6: Wrap Up (Zoom only)

RSVP today at <https://LWVWLRT2024.eventbrite.com>

Member Corner

Our League is 87 members strong, including two student members!

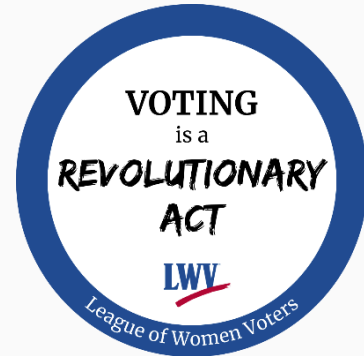
Welcome to these new members who have joined since July:

Jeffery Adams, Polly Casey, Sandra Davis, Owen Heaton, Gibboney Huske, Ann Kramer, Anne Nowrouz, Victor Perez-Eger, and Dawn Ward.

Get your League Gear at our Store

On our online store, you can buy a tee shirt, sweatshirt, ball cap, and mug with our League logo. Visit our Bonfire store here:

<https://www.bonfire.com/results/lwv%20richmond/>



At the Advocacy Planning Meeting, we'll have buttons with the new tagline - *Voting is a Revolutionary Act*. Get some to show your League spirit!

Help Wanted

Help us keep our members informed! We are looking for a volunteer to work with the current editor to put together our three annual publications. *The Leaguer* (December and April) and our Annual Report send out key information about our League activities. The co-editor's job is to assemble content provided by other League leaders and to distribute it via our mailing list. Working on these publications is a great way to learn more about our mission and our achievements. If you would like to join our communications team, please contact Becki Lawson.

Calendar

Watch the Mini-Leaguer for Zoom links and more information.

Special Meetings		
Jan. 10	VA General Assembly session starts	
Jan. 20	Annual Advocacy Program Planning Meeting	10:00 am - 2:00 pm Meadowdale Library, Chesterfield Sam Florer
Weds. Jan. & Feb.	Women's Legislative Roundtables https://LWVWLRT2024.eventbrite.com	8:30 - 9:30 am Virginia General Assembly Building 201 North 9th Street 7th Floor North Meeting Room

Recurring Meetings		
2nd Wed.	Communications	5:30 pm - Jan. 10, Feb. 14, Mar. 13 Kelly Coleman
3rd Mon.	Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)	6:00 pm - Jan. 15, Feb. 19, Mar. 18 Doris Bey
3rd Tue.	Board of Directors	6:00 pm - Jan. 16, Feb. 20, Mar. 19 Anna Mason / Evelyn Glazier
3rd Thu.	Voter Service	5:30 pm - Jan. 18, Feb. 22, Mar. 21 Mary Crutchfield
4th Mon.	Electoral Board Observation	1:30 pm - Jan. 22, Feb. 26, Mar. 25 Mary Grace Boyle
4th Tue.	Education	6:30 pm - Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 26 Marianne Feeney
4th Tue.	Membership & Engagement	2:30 pm - Jan. 23, Feb. 27, Mar. 26 Carol Stephens
4th Wed.	Affordable Housing	Noon - Jan. 24, Feb. 28, Mar. 27 Alice Tousignant
4th Thu.	Events Planning	4:00 pm - Jan. 25, Feb. 29, Mar 28 Fran Eckenrode



Contact Us

How can YOU get involved? Our Richmond area league is active all over the democracy space. Send an email to communications@lww-rva.org and we'll connect you with the Board officer or Committee chair whose portfolio matches your interests.

Co-Presidents: Anna Mason and Evelyn Glazier

VP Program: Sam Florer

VP Operations: Fran Eckenrode

VP Voter Service: Mary Crutchfield

Secretary: Sandy Fowler-Jones

Treasurer: Marianne Feeney

Directors: Doris Bey, Louise Evans, Becki Lawson, Lynn McMartin, Jane Newell, Vickie Parrish, Nancy Priddy, Trish Schwagmeyer, Carol Stephens, Ann Way

Communications: Kelly Coleman

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Doris Bey

Education: Marianne Feeney

Election Modernization: Mary Grace Boyle

Housing: Alice Tousignant

Membership: Carol Stephens

Transportation: Vickie Parrish

The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

We are fully committed to ensure compliance - in principle and in practice - with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy of LWV US.

We work to encourage informed and active participation in government and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Views expressed by non-League links are not necessarily those of the League. These links are provided as a service to readers.

The content of this newsletter is subject to LWV RMA Bylaws, guidelines, and policies.