



**Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy – Since 1920**

## **ANNUAL REPORT FY 2024-2025**

### **A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS**

The FY 2024-2025 year was extremely busy and productive for the League of Women Voters of the Richmond Metro Area (LWV-RMA). Our membership and partnerships with other organizations continued to grow, a powerful reflection of our growing impact.

Through our partnerships with other local nonprofits, every City of Richmond public high school now has a student-led voter registration and education program. LWV-RMA also created a new intern program to give young people hands-on civic leadership experience. Our youth are stepping up – including our 20-year-old board member helping shape our work at the highest level.

In partnership with local media, we hosted the only all-district city council and school board candidate forums in the 2024 Richmond City election. We also hosted or moderated multiple mayoral candidate forums across the city. And once these candidates were elected, they continued to see League members regularly at school board, city council, and electoral board meetings.

Although LWV-RMA took on new activities that increased voter support in key focus areas, our League remained rooted in its mission, continuing our registration and education efforts with clear, accessible fact sheets and a deep commitment to showing up – often at a moment’s notice – for voter registration drives wherever needed.

Beyond elections, our affordable housing, transportation, and education committees continued to engage the community in both advocacy and public education.

And now we’re preparing for our next chapter, applying to become a 501(c)(3) organization, to expand our reach and deepen our civic impact.

This annual report provides additional details about our League’s activities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

*Anna Mason and Evelyn Glazier, Co-Presidents*

***The League of Women Voters is nonpartisan and never supports or opposes political parties or candidates. The League promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and acts on selected governmental issues.***

## **VOTER SERVICES**

*Mary Crutchfield, VP Voter Service*

### **Overview**

For the 2024 Presidential and Richmond citywide elections, LWV-RMA took an “all of the above” approach.

We kicked off Voter Service activity with August’s Refresh meeting where members could sign up to help with registration events, fact sheets, VOTE411, and other activities. We hosted voter registration and education tables at locations including high schools and colleges, public libraries, and New Citizens’ ceremonies in July and September 2024 and June 2025 . We also helped retirement community residents update their registration records at Auburn Hill Senior Living Center, Westminster Canterbury Richmond, CrossRidge 55+ Retirement Community, and Tuckahoe Pines Retirement Community. We sent GOTV postcards with Common Ground and answered voters’ questions on Election Eve and Election Morning at TV station Channel 12. We sponsored Richmond citywide forums for all city council and school board candidates with local media and hosted and partnered with other groups on mayoral forums.



Naturalization Ceremony June 2025 at the State Capitol

### **VOTE411**

VOTE411 voter usage and candidate response continued to grow. In the November 2024 presidential election year more than 160,000 Virginians visited VOTE411.org in September and October.

For our 2024 Richmond City candidates, all mayoral candidates, all but one school board candidate, and all but one city council candidate in contested races replied to the VOTE411 survey.

For the June 2025 primary elections, LWV-RMA handled eight Democratic races with 17 candidates. Twelve candidates answered the survey, a 71% response rate.

As in past years, we printed and distributed 2500 VOTE411 bookmarks to advertise the website in libraries, other public places, and at League events.

### **Empowering the Next Generation: Student Voter Registration Efforts**

The League of Women Voters is making a powerful impact in Richmond by bringing civic engagement directly to high schools and college campuses. In collaboration with partners, more than 200 students were registered across Richmond Public Schools. Of these, the League registered or preregistered over 160 students at the schools it leads. Seniors also took a field trip to the registrar’s office to vote early, reinforcing the importance and accessibility of participating in democracy.

On college campuses, the League teamed up with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) students and the Office of VCU Votes to promote making a plan to vote. At Virginia State University, efforts focused on educating students about same-day registration and understanding what’s on their ballot.

Together, these initiatives are preparing young voters to become informed, engaged citizens — ready to make their voices heard.



Voter registration at Virginia Commonwealth University

### **ADVOCACY ISSUES AND PROGRAM**

*Sam Florer, VP Program*

At our January advocacy program planning meeting we reviewed local and state positions, discussed past activities and planned for the coming year. We discussed issues for state convention and requests from LWV US.

LWV-RMA members attended the state League’s General Assembly pre-session meeting and Women’s Legislative Round Table meetings. Several members testified at the General Assembly at the request of the state League.



Advocacy Program Planning in January 2025.



League members at the 2025 General Assembly

**Education Committee**

The Education Committee held a very informative district school board forum (Richmond, Chesterfield, and Henrico) that discussed what advocacy looks like in our local school districts. The three local government public schools advocates had not previously been brought together and now meet regularly to share ideas.

Our members advocated based on the coordination of Fund Our Schools, as a member of the coalition. We also periodically attended and reported on local school board meetings.

*Anna Mason, Interim Chair*

**Affordable Housing Committee**

The Affordable Housing Committee's goals are to educate League members and, wherever possible, the wider community, about the importance of affordable housing; to advocate for affordable housing at the local level; and to individually advocate at the state and national levels.

During FY 2025, the Committee focused on local advocacy in Richmond City and Chesterfield County. We began the year with a presentation by the Partnership for Housing Affordability on the shortage of affordable housing, affordable housing trust funds, the Maggie Walker Trust, and the importance of becoming engaged in the ongoing local rewrites of the zoning codes. Members spoke out at Chesterfield ZOMod meetings and engaged with the City’s Zoning Refresh plans. The committee will be sponsoring a forum on tenants’ rights and responsibilities in Spring 2026 with Virginia Poverty Law Center and Housing Opportunities Made Equal.

*Marilyn Breslow, Chair*

**Transportation Committee**

The Transportation Committee’s focus for FY 2024-2025 involved more participation and engagement with our partner organizations GRTC and RVA Rapid Transit. GRTC has extended Zero fare through 2025 and launched an initiative to raise \$2 million dollars to continue this service to the communities it serves.

We began with approximately 17 active members and currently have 15 members on our roster. Members participated in planning studies for the North to South Pulse and attended the 2025 State of Transit: Next Generation annual reception. We also saw more members participating in surveys and workshops throughout the year.

We continued to inform and educate members about the need for safe, accessible, affordable public transportation. With our partnerships we expanded our interest and awareness to include information about bike safety locally and throughout the state.

*Vickie Parrish, Chair*

**DEI Committee**

In February for Black History Month we toured “A Better Life for Their Children,” the Virginia Museum of History and Culture’s special exhibit on the South’s Rosenwald Schools for Black students. To celebrate Juneteenth, we had a guided tour of Richmond’s Black History Museum in partnership with the Virginia LWV’s DEI Committee and Charlottesville Leaguers.

*Doris Bey, Chair*



At the Black History Museum

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Membership and Engagement Committee**

LWV-RMA membership totaled 143 for the year, a net increase of 10. We welcomed 75 new members but unfortunately lost 65 to attrition. Some of these losses can be attributed to changes in student and associate member categories due to Transformation.

We invited all new members to attend an orientation meeting, held three Zoom orientations, and provided a recording of the presentation to new members who could not attend. We also worked to connect new members to their committees of interest. We updated the new member orientation slideshow and formulated questions for the Transformation Team’s new member registration process.

At our Annual Meeting in May we honored Virginia Cowles and Amy Burgett for their 50 years as League members. Their dedication is noteworthy - only 23 of our members have been members for 10 years or longer. Virginia is pictured. Amy and husband Leo now live in Pennsylvania and did not attend.



Fifty Years!

The Membership & Engagement Committee had five active members who attended monthly Zoom committee meetings. It is encouraging that our newer members are becoming involved in League committees and activities because “Democracy is a participatory sport!”

*Carol Stephens, Chair*

### **Communications Committee**

The committee continued to meet monthly via Zoom. They produced the Mini Leaguer email newsletter to members twice a month, as well as emails for special events and issues throughout the year. Totaling 47 email communications throughout the fiscal year. Members also posted League news and updates regularly on Facebook and Instagram. Special thanks to our previous committee chair Kelly Coleman.

*Cara Clements, Chair*

### **Fundraising Effort**

A fundraising effort in 2025 exceeded its goal of \$8,000, raising \$11,290. Most donations were directed to the Ed Fund. After FY2025, Local Leagues will receive a smaller portion of member dues because of LWV US's “Framing the Future” membership transformation initiative. LWV-RMA is planning to offset this lower amount of funding by creating a culture of giving among members and other interested groups and individuals. Our League is recruiting member talent to create brochures and flyers explaining how anyone can donate to our league directly or through retirement savings options. LWV-RMA is also partnering with LWV VA to develop fundraising strategies for the future.

### **501c3 Application**

LWV-RMA has started the journey to becoming a 501c3 organization In order to simplify bookkeeping requirements and make it easier to make tax deductible

donations to our League. Tom Carson, LWV California member and spouse of former LWV national president Chris Carson, is advising on the process. At the May 10 Annual Meeting, members voted to make the changes to our Articles of Incorporation and bylaws that are required to submit the IRS application for 501c3 status. The amended articles were submitted and accepted by the Virginia State Corporation Commission and the completed 501c3 application was submitted to the IRS in August. Processing time is expected to be at least 6 months.

*Fran Eckenrode, VP Operations*

### **Transformation of the Richmond Metro Area League**

The LWV of the United States (LWVUS) initiated the Framing the Future program at the national convention in 2018. A key goal of this program was to transform the League by growing the size and diversity of nationwide membership. To achieve this goal LWVUS developed new processes and a centralized system of membership. The central portal for new joins and renewing members launched in February 2025. That required that key officers, directors, and chairs in roles related to membership be trained to learn the new processes. Although we are still working through the glitches of a new system, since the February launch our Richmond Metro League membership has grown by 17%, adding 25 new or returning members.

*Jane Newell, Director of Transformation*

### **LWV Richmond Metro Area Leadership**

#### Board of Directors July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Co-Presidents, Anna Mason and Evelyn Glazier

VP Program, Sam Florer

VP Operations, Fran Eckenrode

VP Voter Service, Mary Crutchfield

Secretary, Georgia Coopersmith

Treasurer, Diane Black

Directors, Louise Evans, Jane Newell, Vickie Parrish, Nancy Priddy, Trish

Schwagmeyer, Ann Way, Doris Bey, Joice Conyers, Marilyn Breslow, and Aria Lovelace

#### Board of Directors July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

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Secretary, Georgia Coopersmith

Treasurer, Diane Black

Directors, Louise Evans, Jane Newell, Vickie Parrish, Nancy Priddy, Trish

Schwagmeyer, Marilyn Breslow, Aria Lovelace, Roxanne Rucker, Jeffery Adams, Leigh Ann McKelway, and Lynn Johnston.

Nominating Committee, Penny Adams, Chair, Carol Stephens, Cara Clements



LWV-RMA 2025-2026 board members at Annual Meeting May 2025

### **Financial Activity**

[Treasurer's Annual Report 2024-2025 link](#)

#### **THANK YOU!**

- To our volunteers, who give their time and energy to our programs and to help our operations run smoothly.
- To our donors, who contribute to both the general and education funds.
- To those who donate in-kind services to our league.