

# League in Action

July 2019

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## President's Message

By Tina Norkus

tnorkus@hotmail.com



Tina making the first cut of our 3rd birthday cake!

### Call to Action

All of us are members of the LWVFRA because we believe our community is made better with an informed and engaged citizenry. Our primary mission is voter education. I doubt there are three people in Virginia who don't know that there is a *presidential* election next year in 2020. But how many people know that there is an election for all 100 delegates and 40 Senate seats in the Virginia legislature in 2019?

How many of us heard from friends and acquaintances last month, "I didn't know there was a primary?" I asked myself what I could have done differently to ensure our community was aware of the primary and the candidates running in it. For the upcoming election, I will post the local candidates on my community's website in late October and include a link to [vote411.org](http://vote411.org). A small gesture, but one we all can make in our own social circles.

In addition to increasing awareness of upcoming elections, we also must educate community members on the critical issues that will be presented before the Virginia legislature next year. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that all redistricting decisions, other than those that violate the [Voting Rights Act](#), are in the hands of the individual states. Therefore, it is even more critical that we support the work of [OneVirginia2021](#) in their mission to end partisan gerrymandering in our state.

As we approach the [100th anniversary](#) of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, how many people know that the ERA is not a part of our Constitution and that Virginia has never ratified this amendment?

We have a lot of work to do in the coming year. We have several events in the pipeline designed to educate the voters in our area. Already scheduled are [National Night Out](#) and several [Civic Labs](#). We are working to schedule candidate forums, voter registration events and additional voter education activities. Our opportunities are limited only by the number of volunteers we need to support these activities. Upcoming events are posted on our [lwvfra.org](http://lwvfra.org) [calendar](#) and an invitation to volunteer has been sent out via [Sign Up Genius](#).

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." -Anonymous

Website: [lwvfra.org](http://lwvfra.org)

Follow us on:

Like us on:

Email: [lwvfra@gmail.com](mailto:lwvfra@gmail.com)

Editor: Meaghan Sekinger

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### July

8th LWVFRA Board Meeting

17th Civic Lab: Dear Elected Official

29th General Meeting: Voter Registration Training & Program Planning

31st Civic Lab: Dear Elected Official

### August

6th National Night Out @ Spotsylvania Towne Center

26th LWVFRA General Meeting: Centennial Celebration Kick-Off!

### September

5th Civic Lab: Dear Elected Official

7th Community Day @ Hurkamp Park

9th LWVFRA Board Meeting

17th Civic Lab: Dear Elected Official  
17th Citizenship Day @ Germanna Community College

25th 2019 FAAR Realtors Expo

30th LWVFRA General Meeting

# Committee Updates

## Program Planning

After completing our first local position in 2018, it's time to begin thinking about new topics for studying a local issue and/or creating Action Committees to advocate for state and national League positions. Is there a topic about which you are enthusiastic, want to learn more about, and will promote positive change in our communities? Consider bringing it up for discussion to see if there are other League members who share your interest and would work on it with you.

There are numerous national and state league positions on many topics that our League could locally advocate for. Look them over and consider how we might promote them in the Fredericksburg area. An Action Committee can be organized locally without the need for a full-blown study and can begin working for change quickly.

LWV-VA Positions: <https://lwv-va.org-advocacy/lwv-va-positioned-for-action>

LWV-US Positions: <https://lwv.org/impact-issues>

Is there a local issue that isn't covered by current national or state positions, but could be addressed with a new study and consensus to develop a local position? Just to name a few, ideas raised in the last two years include how to raise matching local funds for transportation projects, reducing single-use plastic products in our schools and local governments, universal pre-school for county schools, local incentives for solar energy, and funding to reduce runoff to the Rappahannock River. Give some thought to what you really care about -- and are willing to devote some of your time. We will talk about this at the next **General Meeting on July 29**. Be sure to join us!

### Director of Program Planning

Diane Shea, [shea.sullivan70@gmail.com](mailto:shea.sullivan70@gmail.com)

## Membership

This summer, we have achieved our short-term goal of fifty active members! Thank you for spreading the word to your networks and making those community connections that give our League more exposure. If you have not yet made the initial one-time investment of \$50 to become a Founding Member, a distinction open to the first one-hundred donors, please consider it as a way that you can help to build our local League. As we grow our membership, we are expanding our impact to empower voters and defend democracy in exponential ways. What does it mean to be a member of the League of Women Voters of the Fredericksburg Area? Each of us has different interests, skill sets and time to give, but we can all contribute to our efforts to register and educate voters, study local issues and effect change.

Consider how you can contribute and grow the impact of the LWVFRA:

- Share the Facts for Voters brochure or email the [pdf version](#) to your personal networks.
- Offer to carpool with members who may have difficulty driving to meetings and events. Email [lwvframembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwvframembership@gmail.com) if you need a ride or if you are willing to offer a ride.
- Make a donation to underwrite organizational expenses such as printing of voter education materials.
- [Sign up to volunteer](#) for one of our voter registration outreach events.

Before going out to an outreach event, think of a catch phrase or factoid that will spark the interest of a passerby. Here are a few quotes from volunteers at the Fredericksburg Heritage Festival on the Fourth of July:

- "Can you believe that women have only had the right to vote for the last 100 years?"
- "Did you know that women do not have equal rights under the law?"

### Membership Chair

Lena Gonzalez Berrios, [lwvframembership@gmail.com](mailto:lwvframembership@gmail.com)

## Senior Affordable Housing

Earlier this year, our league developed a position statement that calls upon local governments to take a more prominent role in assuring that there are adequate affordable housing options for low-income seniors in Planning District 16. Click [here](#) to review the ratified local position and its six recommendations.

Our efforts since the adoption of our position have already prompted actions in two areas. First, the City of Fredericksburg is currently working on modifications to their existing zoning ordinance related to accessory dwellings. The modifications are expected to be released later this summer or fall and are expected to allow many more property owners to construct accessory dwellings (often called “granny flats”) on their properties as affordable housing units for seniors and others. Second, the George Washington Regional Commission received unanimous approval from their board, which is comprised of representatives of all the jurisdictions within Planning District 16 to request grant funds from the Commonwealth of Virginia to be used to update the “Affordable Housing Task Force Mid-Year Report” of 2008. It is anticipated that that these funds will be made available and the effort will take about a year to complete.

Our current efforts focus on developing a broad coalition of non-partisan organizations to provide greater leverage in pushing for our positions with the local jurisdictions. Several organizations have already expressed interest and discussions are continuing with those organizations. If you are interested in supporting the Senior Affordable Housing Committee, please contact Gerald!

### Senior Affordable Housing Committee Chair

Gerald Anderson, [glanderson1947@gmail.com](mailto:glanderson1947@gmail.com)

## Voter Services

LWVFRA hosted a booth at the Fredericksburg Heritage Festival. We registered 4 voters and recruited 2 new members. Thank you to Tina Norkus, Lena Gonzalez Berrios and her daughter for decorating! Additionally, thank you to Nathan Sekinger, for building and donating an interactive LWVFRA corn-hole game!

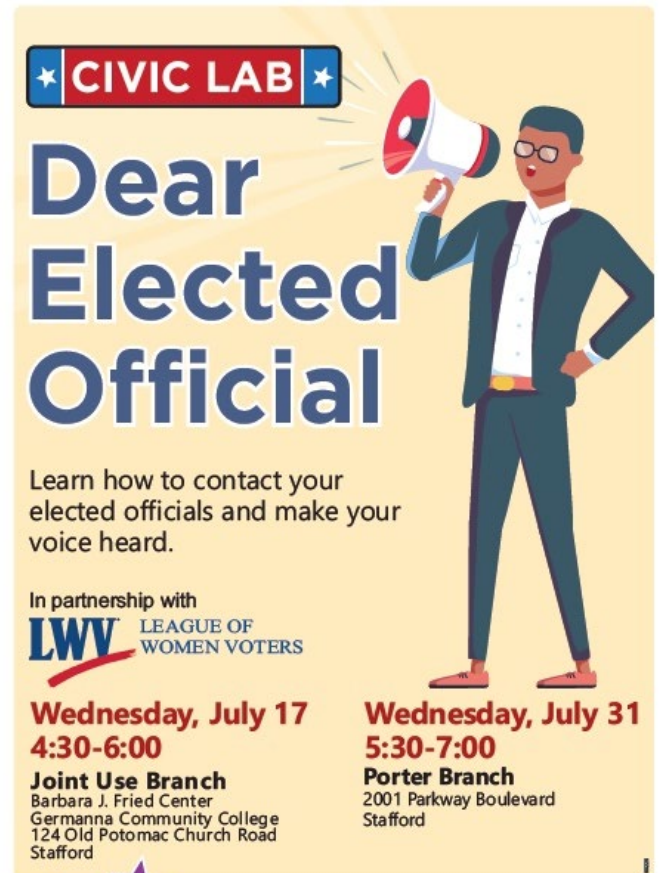
The League is cosponsoring several Civic Labs at various branches of Central Rappahannock Regional Library this summer and fall. Tina Norkus, Elaine Diepenbrock, Michelle Brown and Sue Botts will represent the League at the Civic Labs July 17<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>. Volunteers will be needed for the August 17<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup> sessions to register voters, provide election information, and 2019 Voter Guides.

We are also organizing voter registration drive/classroom visits at Stafford High School in September. Volunteers to assist will be needed!

Look for the LWVFA stand at Community Day at the Hurkamp Farmers Market Saturday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>. Please consider volunteering for a two-hour shift: 9-11 a.m. or 11 a.m.-1 p.m. To volunteer at our events, utilize our convenient [Sign-Up Genius](#) or contact Sue directly.

### Voter Services Chair

Sue Botts, [sbotts11@gmail.com](mailto:sbotts11@gmail.com), 540-376-2219



**CIVIC LAB**

# Dear Elected Official

Learn how to contact your elected officials and make your voice heard.

In partnership with  
**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

**Wednesday, July 17**  
4:30-6:00  
**Joint Use Branch**  
Barbara J. Fried Center  
Germanna Community College  
124 Old Potomac Church Road  
Stafford

**Wednesday, July 31**  
5:30-7:00  
**Porter Branch**  
2001 Parkway Boulevard  
Stafford



**Central Rappahannock Regional Library**  
INSPIRING LIFELONG LEARNING

540-372-1144  
804-472-3820  
[f](https://www.facebook.com/crrlnews) [i](https://www.instagram.com/crrlnews) [y](https://www.youtube.com/crrlnews) [crrlnews.org](https://www.crrlnews.org)

100 YEARS STRONG

LEAGUE of  
WOMEN VOTERS®

LWW

1920 – 2020

## Centennial Celebration!

WOMEN HAVE HAD THE RIGHT TO VOTE FOR ONLY 100 YEARS!

On **August 26, 2019** we will have the chance to recall the events of August 26, 1920, as we kick-off our year-long celebration of Women's Suffrage at our monthly meeting. Please join us as we honor the brave women who protested, suffered, and persevered to give us our rightful place at the ballot box. We will don suffragist banners and sashes, form a procession down Caroline Street and ascend the steps of the Fredericksburg library to be inspired by a program recognizing how far we've come.

Many exciting events have been planned for the next year so stay tuned for more details!

- September Movie Night
- October Dedication of the Virginia Women's Monument
- December Walking in the Fredericksburg Christmas Parade
- March Luncheon with Speaker Scott Walker
- Monthly Mingle Breakfast events to spotlight the women who helped give us the vote
- Special quilt designed by a Founding member to be raffled off
- Book Group discussion: "The Women's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote"
- Day Trips to exhibits at the National Gallery of Art, Library of Congress, African American Museum and the National Archives Museum.

### Centennial Celebration Chair

Cathie Fisher Braman. [cathiebraman@yahoo.com](mailto:cathiebraman@yahoo.com)

### LWVFRA Celebrates 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday!

The League of Women Voters of the Fredericksburg Area celebrated its 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday on Monday, June 24, 2019 at the Fredericksburg Branch Library. During the program portion of the evening, LWVFRA Board of Directors highlighted accomplishments for the year, including: registering high school seniors in Spotsylvania and Stafford high schools, co-sponsoring community engagement events with the Central Rappahannock Regional Library, publishing the "2019 Facts for Voters" guide, and adopting a local position on the issue of affordable housing for low-income seniors in Planning District 16. LWVFRA has many events planned between now and election day to continue to register and educate our community members.



# Welcome

### Welcome New League Members!

Michele Brown      Lynne Chernin  
Richard Chernin      Prudence Hopkins  
Carol Putnam



LWVFRA 19-20 Board Members

### 19-20 LWVFRA Board Members

President, Tina Norkus  
Vice President & Program Planning Chair, Diane Shea  
Secretary, Elaine Diepenbrock  
Treasurer, Debbie Combest  
Centennial Celebration Chair, Cathie Fisher Braman  
Communications Director, Meaghan Sekinger  
Membership Chair, Lena Gonzalez Berrios  
Voter Services Chair, Sue Botts

VOTE411.ORG  
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED