

League in Action!



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President's Message

By Tina Norkus

September is National Voter Registration Month. Along with voter education, registering voters is the primary objective of our League. The League of Women Voters was actually founded almost 100 years ago to help the newly enfranchised woman exercise her right to vote. Registering and educating voters is still the cornerstone of our mission.

The LWVFRA is looking at multiple venues at which to register voters over the next 6 weeks – schools, churches, malls, libraries and community events. We are limited only by the number of volunteers we can get to staff these events. Registering voters is an activity in which all of us can participate.

Need to be trained? That is easily accomplished. There are three ways you can learn to register voters: 1) Self-Training- go to the Virginia Board of Elections [website](#). This training takes about 20 minutes and is self-explanatory. 2) Attend our training offered at the LWVFRA General Meeting on Monday, August 27 at 7 PM at the Downtown Branch of the Fredericksburg Library. 3) On the job training – volunteer to register voters at one of our registration events and we will pair you with a person who has previous experience. You don't need to be certified by the Board of Elections to register voters.

Over the next few weeks we will be asking for volunteers to work at our registration events. Please sign up to help. Registering voters is a simple process and gives each of us the opportunity to make a real contribution to our community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST

- 18th LWVFRA Board Meeting
- 26th Women's Equality Day
- 27th LWVFRA General Meeting & Voter Registration Training

SEPTEMBER

- 8th LWV-VA Fall Workshop
- 17th Constitution Day
- 24th LWVFRA General Meeting
- 25th National Voter Registration Day

OCTOBER

- 15th Deadline to register to vote for 11/6/18 election
- 29th LWVFRA General Meeting
- 30th Deadline to request Absentee Ballot by mail

NOVEMBER

- 6th Election Day!
- 11th Veterans Day

Committee Updates

Communications

The Communications Committee is a newly formed group of League members currently led by Meaghan Sekinger as Director of Communications. The purpose of the Communications Committee is to ensure clear and timely information to our League members, future members and local stake holders regarding our mission and League sponsored events.

This year, we hope to clearly communicate all upcoming League sponsored events and increase membership involvement. Since July 1st, we have worked collaboratively with the Membership Committee to develop a new brochure and League membership application. Additionally, we are now on [Facebook](#) AND [Twitter](#)! We hope to publish 4 newsletter articles quarterly beginning in 2019. If you have editing skills or ideas for future newsletters, please contact Meaghan Sekinger at mesekingerg@gmail.com.

Be sure to read the monthly [newsletter](#) published by The League of Women Voters of Virginia. When you join our local League, you will receive these newsletters via e-mail.

Program Planning

The Program Planning committee is currently working on a local study, which is chaired by Gerald Anderson and is examining the availability of affordable housing for residents over 65 years-of-age in the Fredericksburg area. We plan to publish a report based on our findings for League members and the community, have a discussion about what solutions may be needed, and develop a position statement as the basis of League advocacy and action.

Our goals are to complete the report and develop consensus questions for League members by the winter, discuss realistic solutions for addressing the issue in the spring, and reach agreement by the League on a position by the Annual Meeting outlining the League's recommendations for local officials.

We are finalizing our research of existing studies and programs and beginning our review of local programs and policies in Virginia and other locations around the country. We encourage interested League members to join the committee which meets monthly. For more

Membership

Just like our name indicates, our main focus is our members. We are committed to grow and sustain membership and to ensure members are informed and engaged in the activities of the League. We work hand in hand with Communications to connect with members. For example, we are in the process of developing packets for potential and new members, so that people will know more about who we are, what we stand for and how they can get involved.

In an effort to raise start-up funds for our League, we initiated a founding membership for the first 100 members to pay an additional one-time \$50 fee. If you haven't yet taken this step, please consider adding the distinction of being a founder of this leading organization that cultivates civic engagement in our region. We are also looking for new ways to raise funds while connecting with members and the community, and we welcome your ideas. Currently we have 48 members, 33 of which are founding members. Connect with the Co-Chairs: Brenda Hooper, hooperbm@yahoo.com
Lena Gonzalez Berrios, lgberrios1968@gmail.com

Voter Services

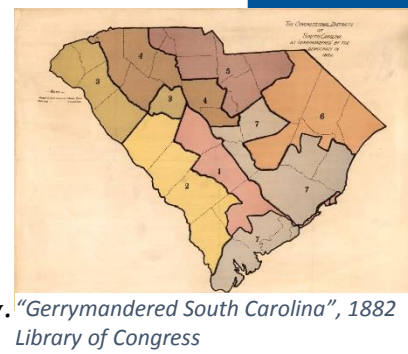
The Voter Services committee lies at the heart of our League's purpose. Lucretia Edreos currently serves as the Voter Services Chair and is also the League's 1st Vice President. Since our League's inception, we have focused on registering voters and organized our first LWV FRA sponsored Candidates Forum last fall.

The Voter Services Committee will focus on registering voters and promoting Get Out the Vote (GOTV) initiatives over the next three months. We recently received permission to assist in registering high school seniors for Spotsylvania County Public Schools and at James Monroe High School! Additionally, all Voter Services Committee members and interested League members: please mark your calendars for the evening of September 26th for a voter registration event.

When speaking to friends, colleagues and community members, be sure to refer them to our www.VOTE411.org website to get updated information on Election Day ballots and candidates.

Issue Update: Redistricting

The League of Women Voters of the United States, of Virginia and our local league have made partisan gerrymandering a topic of focused attention. Did you know that due to Virginia state law, elected officials draw district maps? This has resulted in the party of the majority deliberately manipulating congressional district boundaries to give them a competitive edge. By the look of the map to the right, Gerrymandering has plagued our democracy for over a century.



This spring, there were two cases brought to the US Supreme Court from Michigan and Maryland. Unfortunately, the “justices sidestepped the question of when extreme partisan gerrymandering is unconstitutional.” (Barnes, 2018) In response to the court ruling, Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters of the US said, “Today’s decision is yet another delay in providing voters with the power they deserve in our democracy. Partisan gerrymandering is distorting and undermining our representative democracy, giving politicians the power to choose their voters, instead of giving voters the power to choose their politicians.” The League of Women Voters of the US has adopted a position on redistricting, which supports utilizing an independent commission as part of the redistricting process, rather than elected officials, who often have a vested interest in retaining their incumbency. Click [here](#) to read the US LWV position.

Barnes, Barnes. “Efforts to Limit Partisan Gerrymandering Falter at Supreme Court.” *The Washington Post*, June 18, 2018.

Thank You!

The League of Women Voters of the Fredericksburg Area would like to thank the following members who have demonstrated their commitment to the League and to the mission of Empowering Voters; Defending Democracy!

Diane Shea & Gerald Anderson- for their steadfast dedication to the Program Committee and ensuring our League’s mission impact is felt locally!

Tina Norkus- for her commitment and leadership to the League of Women Voters as our new president!

Welcome New League Members

Sue Botts	Michael Spragins
Rita Daniels	Dr. Christine Thompson
Kay McKinney	Thompson
Nathan Sekinger	Deb Wilcox

Sip & Paint Fundraiser!

Interested in a fun evening filled with creativity, laughter and your favorite refreshment? Join Meaghan Sekinger and Jodi Longwell who will be hosting the League of Women Voter’s First Sip & Paint Fundraiser! Space is limited to the first 15 registered. Event is open for League members and their friends and family only.

Click the link below to sign up.

<http://evite.me/fPaTny2Gsa>

When: Saturday, September 15th

Time: 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Location: Meaghan Sekinger’s House

Cost: \$35 per person
(Checks payable to: LWVFRA)

Items to Bring: A dish to share, your favorite refreshment and an apron or smock.



Painting will be fall themed similar to image above

VOTE411.ORG[®]
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED