



# The Voter

League of Women Voters of Loudoun County

January 2005

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## Message from the President

Happy New Year to all our League members! While 2004 was certainly an exciting year as we welcomed many new members, we look forward to a number of exciting projects in 2005.

But before leaving behind 2004 too quickly, let us all pause and remember dear League members we lost in 2004. (*See page 2.*) We need to remember them throughout 2005 and be inspired by them as they each gave so much.

We jump start January with some very important work charged upon the League by Board of Supervisors Chairman Scott York. On Jan. 10 we are holding a meeting to discuss the possibility of a number of changes to the structure of county government. (*See pages 3, 4 and 5.*) Following the discussions, League members will be invited to join study committees formed for each area. Following these studies, we will present our findings to the Board of Supervisors. It is our hope that the Board will then form a Blue Ribbon Committee to continue our work and initiate the processes by which any potential change could occur.

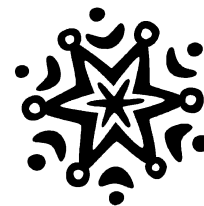
And anyone who has lived in Virginia would know, January is a very busy month in Richmond as the 2005 General Assembly session convenes on Jan. 12th. Numerous opportunities exist for League members to have their voices heard. We urge members to participate by contacting your representatives with your positions on State issues. Remember, if you address a League issue do so as an individual. Only the President speaks for the League.

League Lobbying Day in Richmond is Feb. 2 in the Capitol Building in Richmond. Lobby your legislators, take a tour, and meet with League leaders from across the State. It's a great day. I hope you can join us.

I wish to give kudos to all those people who answered the call of the General Registrar's need for help and gave of their time, talents and energy. Judy Brown our Registrar and the Loudoun Electoral Board appreciates our efforts and we did make a difference!

*Betsy*

Betsy Mayr, President



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***Betty Stowe***

Mary Elizabeth (Betty) Stowe, a former author and Loudoun County School Board Member, died on September 3, 2004 while working in the garden at her home on the mountain above Round Hill. She was 84 years old.

Mrs. Stowe, who had lived in Loudoun since 1963, had served as president of the Loudoun League of Women Voters, a founder of the Committee of '55 (a county-wide forum of the late 60s and early 70s), a founder and board member of the Loudoun Library Foundation, Loudoun representative of the Community Education Program of the Higher Education Consortium of Northern Virginia, and as Blue Ridge District member of the Loudoun County School Board from 1973-1978. While on the Board, she served for two years as vice chairman and for several months as chairman before her retirement.

A graduate of the University of Kansas, she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Theta Sigma Phi, and Gamma Phi Beta. She worked as a reporter and editor for the *Kansas City Star* for several years before her marriage to Seymour Franklin (Sam) Stowe, former Illinois newspaperman and information director of the Federal Trade Commission. He died in 1985.

For many years Mrs. Stowe wrote short stories and novels for leading national magazines, her works appearing frequently in the old *American Magazine*, *Redbook*, *McCall's*, *Family Circle*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Woman's Day*, as well as in magazines abroad. One of her short novels, "Faces of Guilt," became a best selling paperback and was made into a television drama. Her last book, *How to Get Things Changed*, was written in collaboration with Bert Strauss of the Community Education Program and published by Doubleday.

Mrs. Stowe was also a member of the Round Hill Woman's Club, of the Sesame Club and of the Round Hill United Methodist Church, where she had served as an adult class Sunday School teacher, as UMW president, education chairman and as chairman of the long range planning committee.

She is survived by a daughter, Susan Elizabeth Stowe of Arlington, VA, a nephew, John Dana Coulson of San Francisco, CA and a niece, Carole Coulson

Kosanovich of Big Rapids, Michigan. Memorial services were held at the Round Hill United Methodist Church. Memorial contributions can be made to the United Methodist Church, the Round Hill Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad or the Loudoun Library Foundation.

***Wilhemina "Billie" Hetzel***

Long-time League member Billie Hetzel died on December 14, 2004 at age 96. League members and friends are invited to share their memories of Billie which we will publish in our next issue of *The Voter*. Kindly forward them to Betsy Mayr at [EMayr59433@aol.com](mailto:EMayr59433@aol.com) or call her at (703) 777-9425.

***Janet Hays***

Janet Hays, who was our Liaison from the LWV of the National Capital Area, died in October 2004. She attended our annual meeting in June and was one of the most upbeat and positive persons to work with. She was energetic and gave so much to the League... nationally, in the capital area, throughout the state and in her local Arlington League – her shoes will be very hard to fill. Our deepest sympathies go to her husband, children and grandchildren.

***Phyllis Bailey***

*From Ben Greenberg, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Virginia* - For those of you who did not know Phyllis, she has been the chief lobbyist at the General Assembly for the League of Women Voters of Virginia for as long as I have known her. She dealt with a broad range of issues but choice was always one in which she stood up to the extremists and helped educate and inform those who were willing to listen. Fortunately for all of us, many did listen, for Phyllis had a way with people. They listened and heard and understood the truth she was sharing with them. She amazed me sometimes with votes she influenced, legislators who could only be considered long shots for voting for reproductive rights. She could talk to Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, men and women, the powerful and the less powerful. Phyllis always knew how to communicate succinctly and effectively. She had an incredible way of getting to the heart of an issue and its meaning. We all learned a lot from Phyllis and became better people just knowing her. We all owe her so much. We will miss her. I will miss her.



Loudoun Board of Supervisors Chairman Scott York will lead the League of Women Voters of Loudoun County in discussions on various forms of county government, the concept of staggered terms, and the possibility for creation of a county police department on **Monday, January 10, 2005**, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the cafeteria of Loudoun County High School, 415 Dry Mill Road, SW, in Leesburg. Be sure to enter the school by the front doors. All League members and guests are welcome.

There are seven forms of county government and organization authorized by Virginia statutes. The oldest and most familiar of these is the constitutional or "traditional" form and this is the form Loudoun currently uses along with all but 11 of the 95 Virginia counties. With the traditional form we elect BOS and all constitutional offices. The BOS appoints a county administrator who works at the discretion of the BOS. Other forms include a "County Executive" form of government which Albemarle and Prince William counties utilize. Henrico and Arlington counties use a "County Manager" form. Fairfax County uses an "Urban County Executive" form.

Chairman York will also discuss the possibility of establishing staggered terms for the Loudoun Board of Supervisors. Currently, all members of the board are elected every four years. If the County went to staggered terms, some members of the County Board and the School Board would be elected every two years.

"With Loudoun now the fastest growing county in the United States and the population exceeding well over 200,000, I believe it's time to discuss the needs of our growing population in terms of its governmental structure," said Chairman York.

Following discussions, League members will be invited to join various study groups for the various discussion subjects. Upon completion of this study, the League will report on its findings and make its recommendations to the BOS on how best to proceed.

"I am very pleased that Chairman York has the confidence in the League of Women Voters to do a nonpartisan study of this magnitude. The important thing we will all gain from this study is education

regarding government structure," said Betsy Mayr, League President.

All Virginia counties use the Traditional Form and General Provisions except the ones listed below:

**Optional Forms:**

- County Board Form (Scott, Carroll, Russell Cos.)
- County Executive Form (Albemarle, Prince Wllm.)
- County Manager Form (Henrico)
- County Manager Plan (Arlington)
- Urban County Executive Form (Fairfax)

For more information about each of these forms of government, refer to the following sections of the Code of Virginia: Title 15.2- COUNTIES, CITIES AND TOWNS, which is available to view online at the State's legislative website, [www.leg1.state.va.us](http://www.leg1.state.va.us).

**Make Your Voice Heard  
with the General Assembly**

**Virginia Online Legislature:**

<http://legis.state.va.us> for contact info for your legislators and info on committee membership.

**Legislative Information System:**

<http://leg1.state.va.us> for info on legislation introduced with bill summaries and text of bills.

**Constituent Viewpoint Opinion Line:**

1-800-889-0229 M-F, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Loudoun District Numbers:**

- Senator Bill Mims, 33<sup>rd</sup>
- Senator Russ Potts, 27<sup>th</sup>
- Delegate Dick Black, 32<sup>nd</sup>
- Delegate Joe May, 33<sup>rd</sup>
- Delegate Tom Rust, 86<sup>th</sup>
- Delegate Gary Reese, 67<sup>th</sup>
- Delegate Bob Marshall, 13<sup>th</sup>

**Town Hall Meeting with Loudoun's Delegation:**

Tentatively scheduled for Thurs., Jan. 6, 2005 7:00 p.m. in the BOS meeting room in the County Government Center, Harrison Street, Leesburg. Check local newspapers to confirm date/times.



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One of the topics Chairman Scott York has asked us to investigate is whether or not Loudoun County should change to staggered terms. At the meeting in January, he will discuss this issue with us. This article covers some basic information about staggered terms. Think about it, talk about it with your family and friends and come prepared to discuss it in January. Also at the January meeting, you can volunteer to be on the Staggered Terms Study Committee and delve into it even further and develop a recommendation for the Board of Supervisors.

### What are staggered terms?

- If the County went to staggered terms some of the members of the County Board of Supervisors and the School Board would be elected every two years (biennially) in place of the current system where all members are elected every four years.
- Since the Chairman of the Board is elected from the county at large, the Chairman's office (for both the County Board of Supervisors and the School Board) is not effected by staggered terms.
- To implement staggered terms, there needs to be a *transition election* for the remaining 8 districts. For instance, if staggered terms were implemented in 2005, there would be a transition election in 2007.

### How would the transition election work?

- 4 of the 8 magisterial districts would have one-time 2-year terms.
- The remaining 4 districts would have 4-year terms.
- The Chairman, At Large, would not change and continue to be elected every 4 years for a 4-year term.
- In subsequent elections, Board members would be elected biennially for 4-year terms in all 8 districts.

### How are districts selected for the short 2-year terms?

- The Loudoun County Electoral Board would conduct a lottery to select which districts will have 2-year and 4-year terms in the 2007 election.
- **Both** members of the School Board and the County Board of Supervisors in the same district will have the **same** length of term.

### When is the lottery conducted?

- It can be conducted the day after the election (November 2007). This makes for an incredibly exciting event and great headlines!
- However, the County Board of Supervisors can pass an ordinance or resolution directing that the lottery be done prior to the deadline for candidate filings (June 2007). If this is done, voters know which candidates are running for which length of terms when they cast their vote.

### How is the decision to go to staggered terms made?

- The County Board of Supervisors can pass an ordinance selecting to transition to staggered terms. **OR**
- The County Board of Supervisors can vote to put a referendum on the ballot asking voters to vote yes or no on this question. **OR**
- The voters can collect the required signatures, 10% of total registered voters (currently approx. 13,200) to put a referendum on the ballot.
- This change must also be pre-cleared by the U.S. Department of Justice under the *Voting Rights Act* before it can be implemented. The County Registrar submits this application.

### What offices would this effect?

- The members of the County Board of Supervisors and the School Board terms would be staggered since terms for both of these offices must be the same as stated in Virginia code.

### Which counties currently use staggered terms?

- Currently, 44 counties have staggered terms (of the 96 total)

*Continued on page 5*



**How would this work exactly in Loudoun County?**

- As an example, if the Potomac, Blue Ridge, Broad Run, and Catoctin Districts were selected to have the one-time 2-year terms:
  - **In November 2007:**  
At-Large, Dulles, Leesburg, Sterling and Sugarland Run would be elected for a 4-year term.  
Potomac, Blue Ridge, Broad Run, and Catoctin Districts would be elected for a 2-year term.
  - **In November 2009:**  
Potomac, Blue Ridge, Broad Run, and Catoctin Districts would be elected for a 4-year term.
  - **In November 2011:**  
At-Large, Dulles, Leesburg, Sterling and Sugarland Run would be elected for a 4-year term.
  - **In November 2013:**  
Potomac, Blue Ridge, Broad Run, and Catoctin Districts would be elected for a 4-year term.
  - **And so on...**

**What is the impact on the cost of elections?**

- There would be negligible impact on cost of elections since elections are already done each year:
  - 2007:** General Assembly and Local Officials
  - 2008:** President and House of Rep.
  - 2009:** Governor, House of Delegates
  - 2010:** US Senate, House of Rep.
  - 2011:** General Assembly and Local Officials

**What are some of the Pros for going to staggered terms?**

- Provides more stability and continuity in county government.
- Prevents total board replacement every four years.
- Lessens the impact of board members running for re-election.

**What are some of the Cons for going to staggered terms?**

- Shorter, one-time terms for 2 districts might feel unfair to some residents.
- Potential voter confusion in transition year.
- Some argue that it also provides less stability and continuity in county government.

**Where can I get more information?**

- Full text of laws governing the change to staggered terms can be found at:
  - § 24.2-219. Alternative for biennial county supervisor elections and staggered terms.  
(see <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+24.2-219>)
  - § 22.1-57.3. Election of school board members  
(see <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+22.1-57.3>)

**Reminder About Dues!**

*Jean Sagan, our Membership Committee chair, announced that all new members will pay dues during their anniversary month. Those who were members and paid dues in January 2004 will need to renew in January 2005. Notices for these dues will be sent out soon. Those members joining after January 2004 can renew their membership in the month in which they joined the League. Are your dues due?*



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From the League of Women Voters of Virginia  
**Pre-Session Meeting of  
Women's Legislative Roundtable**  
Report by Lulu Meese, Dec. 1, 2004

More than sixty people traveled to Richmond on Dec. 1st to prepare for the upcoming General Assembly Session that begins Jan. 12th. We had representatives from AAUW, BPW, NOW, the Sorensen Institute, Women's Network, ACLU, Delegate Parrish's Legislative Assistant, VICPP, Delegate Baskerville's Legislative Assistant, Methodist Women, and most of the local Leagues from across Virginia. Our President, Katie Hobbs, welcomed everyone and asked them to bring copies of their organizations' 2005 Action Priorities to Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> Roundtable Meeting.

Five speakers shared their concerns with us:

**Senator Emmett Hanger Jr.** told us there is a need for more tax reform to make Virginia tax laws more progressive, including an additional bracket on the high end of income. We should also consider taxing internet sales to be fairer to retailers. He told us of his concerns about the No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on Education in Virginia. Sen. Hanger reminded us that we have the need to address the unmet costs and needed mix in transportation. He also said that we will need to consider a dedicated tax to fund the cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay such as Maryland's 'flush tax'.

**Judge Jannene Shannon** talked of her heavy caseload of Children at Risk, delinquents and their families. She said there continues to be a need for Family Courts' legislation and this time it would need to be funded. She told us of the more violent youth crimes that have necessitated that youth as young as 14 years be tried as adults.

**Senator John Watkins** talked of the restructuring of utilities law in Virginia. He mentioned that these decisions will affect all of our lives and that we should become informed as to options. He also

talked of his concern about the medical malpractice costs in Virginia and the fact that we are losing many our Ob-Gyn doctors due to this cost.

**Delegate Vivian Watts** made the case for additional monies needed to meet Virginia's serious transportation needs. She told us that the present gas tax has lost 60% of its funding power since 1987, the last date of gas tax increase. She said she would expect to support the constitutional change that would permit our Governor to serve more than one term. She said that times and leaders had changed so much that this change is now needed. Delegate Watts talked at length about the study of Assisted Living in which she had taken part. She told us of the need for greater fines for poor facilities, more money to help poor, and more training for staff. She said that many of these bills will be introduced for consideration in 2005 General Assembly.

**First Vice President Meese** reported on Women's Issues. She told us of economic needs, lack of health insurance and rigid laws dictating women's medical choices. She told us of the Emergency Contraception Hotline: 888-NOT2-LATE, sponsored by the Medical Professional Association. They provide information on the pill since two-thirds of pharmacies are not aware of it and some even believe that it is illegal even with required prescription. She told us of continued violence against women and that Richmond was ranked 9<sup>th</sup> most violent city in our country. She reminded us that poor women's services for education, training, transportation and child care have been cut even though they are required to work. Meese closed by urging us to either run for office or to generously fund women who are running.

The LWV VA appreciated the generous sharing of time by our speakers, and was delighted that so many members and organizations were able to attend. We look forward to seeing many Leaguers at the regular Women's Legislative Roundtables, beginning January 19<sup>th</sup> in 5<sup>th</sup> Floor East Conference Room, General Assembly Building.



## January

- 10 Meeting with Loudoun Board of Supervisors Chairman Scott York**  
Chairman York will speak about our future studies concerning: Form of County Government (see page 3), Staggered Terms for the Board (see pages 4-5), and a County Police Department. Following discussion, study committees will be formed.  
**Who should attend:** All members and guests are welcome.  
**Time:** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Loudoun County High School, 415 Dry Mill Rd., SW, Leesburg (Enter by the front doors)  
**For more information:** Contact League President Betsy Mayr, 703-777-9425
- 19 Women’s Legislative Roundtables**  
The regular Women’s Legislative Roundtables begins January 19<sup>th</sup> in 5<sup>th</sup> Floor East Conference Room, General Assembly Building, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
- 25 League Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Who should attend:** All members are welcome.  
**Time:** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Leesburg Airport Building  
**For more information:** Contact League President Betsy Mayr, 703-777-9425

## February

- 2 League Day** will be held Feb. 2 at the General Assembly building in the same room and time as Roundtable meetings.
- 21 Unit Meeting**  
**Who should attend:** All members and guests are welcome. **Topic:** To be announced  
**Time:** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. **Location:** To be announced
- 22 League Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Who should attend:** All members are welcome.  
**Time:** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Leesburg Airport Building  
**For more information:** Contact League President Betsy Mayr, 703-777-9425

## March

- 21 Unit Meeting**
- 22 League Board of Directors Meeting**

## Mark Your Calendars...

The 2005 convention will be held in Fredericksburg on **April 30 and May 1, 2005**. Loudoun County will be hosting. Please mark your calendars. Call Betsy (703-777-9425) if you can **volunteer!!!**

*The Voter* is a monthly newsletter produced by and for the League of Women Voters of Loudoun County. Suggestions for articles, announcements and other material are welcome – subject to editing for clarity and space - and should be directed to: President: Betsy Mayr [EMayr59433@aol.com](mailto:EMayr59433@aol.com) Editors: Sheryl Wolfe [smwolfe@direcway.com](mailto:smwolfe@direcway.com) and Eileen Levandoski [keysgap@earthlink.net](mailto:keysgap@earthlink.net).



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
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**Betsy Mayr – President**

**January 2005**