



Voter

League of Women Voters of Loudoun County

April 2009

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Nominating Gem Bingol

Unit Meeting April 20, 2009 Consensus on National Popular Vote

Please join us April 20 from 7 – 9 pm at the Leesburg Airport conference room for discussion and consensus on the **National Popular Vote**. Attendees may review study materials at <http://www.lwv.org/NPV>.

The LWV has long sought to replace the Electoral College with a direct vote for President and Vice-President. Since attempts to amend the Constitution have failed, a group of political science/election law experts proposed the National Popular Vote State Compact to accomplish the purpose without a Constitutional Amendment. Delegates to last year's LWVUS Convention voted on a study on NPV. If you have any questions, please contact Shelley Tamres, shelleytam@aol.com, 703-450-0218.

Consensus is due May 1. A national LWV policy may be generated from the results of this study. See story on page 3 for additional information.

High School Voter Registration Schedule

April 14 - 15: Stone Bridge (Hay Road, Ashburn)

April 16 - 17: Dominion (Augusta Drive, Sterling)

May 5 - 6: Briar Woods (Belmont Ridge Rd., Ashburn)

May 11- 12: Loudoun Valley (Purcellville)

May 20 - 21: Park View (Laurel Ave. Sterling)

To be Scheduled:

Heritage, Loudoun County, Potomac Falls, Freedom, Heritage, Broad Run.

We need volunteers for most of these dates. Please contact Jean Brown, 540-338-7628, oaklandBB@aol.com or Jennifer Severance, 703-771-8467, Jennifer_severance@yahoo.com.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF LOUDOUN COUNTY**

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www.loudoun.va.lwvnet.org/

League Web Sites

www.vote411.org

NCA - www.lwvnca.org

LWV VA - www.lwv-va.org

LWVLC - www.loudoun.va.lwvnet.org

LWVLC Webmaster e-mail - wm@loudoun.va.lwvnet.org

LWVLC e-mail - league@loudoun.va.lwvnet.org

LWVUS – www.lwv.org

From the President

We had to cancel out April 5 Tea/Speaker Series. Only 15 people registered to attend, despite media and community outreach, ads in *Leesburg Today* and the *Easterner*, and e-mail blasts. I am hoping this was just a statement on the state of the economy rather than a lack of support for our League from its members and the public. This was to be our major fundraiser. We need funds to continue our work with voter education and outreach, since a great percentage of dues go to the national, state, and National Capital Area Leagues. Please let me know your ideas for fundraising.

If you get a call from Gem Bingol, Betsy Mayr, Carla Wiley, Denise Donnelly, or David Kirsten asking you to serve on the Board of Directors, please say *yes*. We need to fill several Board positions and need dynamic people like *you*. If you can't wait for the call, contact Gem Bingol at 703-771-1645, gbingol@pecva.org.

Marla McIntyre

President@loudoun.va.lwvnet.org



Welcome New Members

Tim Chestnutt ☯ Lauren Maria Manuel ☯ Carole Dannels Miller
☯ Kathy Shupe

And a new Mini-Leaguer...

Board member and *Voter* Editor Jennifer Severance and her husband Todd welcomed **Colin James Severance** to their family on March 10. Colin is their third child.



Helen Wallace, President late 60s

We were saddened to learn of the death of Helen Gwinn Wallace at her winter home in Naples, Fl. Helen was President of LWVLC from 1969 to 1971. During those years she presided over the formation of the Loudoun County Public Nominating Forum, an organization the League sponsored to formalize an opportunity for citizens to have a voice in the nominating process of School Board members. At that time, the local School Board was appointed by a three member School Trustee Electoral Board which was appointed by Circuit Court Judge, who was appointed by the General Assembly. The Forum functioned for awhile after the Board of Supervisors became the appointers of School Board members, but the County's approval of an Elected School Board made the Forum obsolete. Helen taught Latin and English at the Potomac School in McLean, Loudoun Country Day School, and the Hill School in Middleburg. Her volunteer work with many organizations included the Retarded Children's Association, the Windy Hill Housing Council, and Loudoun County schools. Memorial services were held in Bonita Springs, FL on March 27 and Aldie's Church of the Redeemer on April 4.



An Introduction to Instant Runoff Voting

By Shelley Tamres, Second Vice President

There will be an opportunity at the Virginia League State Convention in May to vote for a study on Instant Runoff Voting (IRV), which is a type of ranked choice voting system. There are many reasons for supporting such a study.

LWV is an important and respected voice on election processes. Since the 2000 election, the electorate has become more aware of how election systems can affect the outcome of close races. A number of issues that are already of concern to the League are directly or indirectly affected by our choice of voting system. These issues include, but are not limited to: cost of elections; voter turnout; negative campaigning; "spoilers"; minority representation; and competition for public office.

Currently in Virginia, most elections are for single-member districts with plurality voting. In other words, most elections consist of candidates running for a position for which there is only one winner (single-member district), and the winner is whoever receives the most votes...no majority is required (plurality, aka "first past the post" or "winner take all"). IRV is the ranked choice voting system that works with single-member districts. However, IRV provides a winner supported by a majority, rather than a plurality.

IRV works by allowing the voter to rank all candidates in a particular race from 1 to n, with n being the number of candidates. If no candidate is the first choice of at least half the voters, a "runoff" is conducted. The candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and those votes redistributed to those voters' second choices. Runoffs are continued until a candidate receives at least 50% of the votes.

These are sample IRV ballots:

Rank your choices from 1 to 5 You need not rank them all	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Jones
<input type="checkbox"/>	Juan Lopez
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nicole Rousseau
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Smith
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ (write-in)

Fill in the square for your 1st choice candidate, 2nd choice, etc. You may rank as many or as few candidates as you wish Fill in no more than one square per column Fill in no more than one square per candidate					
	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	4th choice	5th choice
Sue Jones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juan Lopez	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nicole Rousseau	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bob Smith	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ (write-in)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The use of IRV eliminates the problem of "spoiler" candidates swinging the outcome of the election to the candidate with the least support. It ensures winners have majority support.

Because spoilers are eliminated, supporters of third parties and independents can vote their conscience with their first choice and allocate their second choice to the major party they favor most, knowing they are not hurting the favored major party. This in turn can encourage third party and independent candidates to run, which increases competition for public office and exposes voters to more choices and more ideas for solving problems.

Ranked choice voting systems encourage all candidates to seek the second and third choices of supporters of their competition. As a result, negative campaigning is decreased.

Six state Leagues have already conducted studies of either IRV or ranked choice voting systems, and all have adopted positions in favor of them. Virginia should be the next state to focus on this important means of improving our election system.

For more information, contact Shelley Tamres at 571-216-4867 or shelleytam@aol.com. Also, please contact her if you would be interested in serving on an IRV study committee.



National, State, & Local League News

NATIONAL – LWVUS

LWV Featured in *Washington Post* MiniPage

This past weekend *The Mini Page*, a syndicated feature that appears in *The Washington Post* and other newspapers, was all about the League of Women Voters. View it at <http://thetandd.com/minipage/today.pdf>

Seeking Members for the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force (NEW)

The LWVUS Board of Directors is forming a task force to review the LWVUS position on Arms Control. Board Member Stephanie Johnson is chairing this task force. The task force will be charged with reviewing the position for relevance, usefulness and practical application. LWV members who are interested in this task force and have interest, experience and expertise in the areas of arms control and national security issues are invited to apply to this task force. Go to www.lwv.org for the application form and more information. The application deadline is May 1, 2009.

League Official Partner in the 2010 U.S. Census (NEW)

The LWV is an official partner in the 2010 U.S. Census. The LWVUS is in the process of creating a webpage at www.lwv.org that Leagues can access and link to in order to be informed at all times. This is a year-long effort with lots of opportunities for Leagues to get involved. Please contact zarguedas@lwv.org for additional information.

LWVUS sponsors of The Leon Jaworski Public Program Series

The League has celebrated Law Day by organizing forums and other educational activities on May 1. Law Day is a national holiday enacted into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on April 7, 1961. On Thursday, April 30, 4 – 6 pm at the Newseum, 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC, the program will be “Lincoln as Lawyer, Lincoln as Orator.”

The program will focus on the 2009 Law Day theme: *A Legacy of Liberty – Celebrating Lincoln's Bicentennial*. Panelists will consider the framing questions indicated below and engage in a moderated discussion with the other panelists and the audience.

- How did Abraham Lincoln's background and experience as a lawyer influence his political values and practices, including his service as president?
- To what extent did Lincoln integrate—or separate—ethics and the law, his sense of morality from his sense of duty to the law? His sense of duty to the law from his sense of responsibility to the nation?
- What is the relationship between Lincoln the lawyer and Lincoln the orator? Can we imagine one without the other? How did Lincoln's lawyerly dispositions affect his oratory? How did his oratorical skills aid his legal practice?
- How did religion shape and influence Lincoln's oratory, legal and political?
- Can we see the presence of "Lincoln the lawyer" in his most famous speeches and public pronouncements—for example, the Cooper Union speech, the Lincoln-Douglas Debates, Emancipation Proclamation, First and Second Inaugurals, and the Gettysburg Address? If so, what substance and form does it take?

Panelists include **Jean H. Baker**, Goucher College; **Andrew Delbanco**, Columbia University; **Allen Guelzo**, Gettysburg College; **Frank J. Williams**, Chief Justice RI Supreme Court; with moderator **Kathleen Hall Jamieson**, Annenberg School for Communication. To register, go to, <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/invite.shtm> or contact David Ward at dward@lww.org; 202-263-1307. For program details, visit www.abanet.org/publiced/jaworski.html

NCA – National Capital Area

LWVUS President Mary Wilson spoke to members at the March 6 Board Meeting. She discussed the Sisters on the Planet meeting on Global Warming. The organization is concerned with the impact of climate issues on women and finding ways for women to adapt to results of the changes. LWVUS will be involved in educational forums on the topic. The highest priority is climate change as well as violence against women and trafficking of women. Other LWVUS activities include planning an education process for health care reform and how the League can begin to lobby Cabinet members. Any League member can sign on to the Weekly Leader's e-mail service. The LWVUS is also working on a proposal on sharing of information with members including those who do not have email.

By-laws. Ellen Gross presented proposed changes to Article V, Board of Directors, Section 5. Regular Meeting add ...of all regular meetings by mail, e-mail or fax, giving the time and place of the meeting. Article V, Board of Directors, Section 6. Special meetings. Add two new sentence after the first sentence, Special meetings may be conducted by electronic means, such as telephone conference call, video conferencing or e-mail. The use of electronic meetings shall be reserved for those issues needing a decision before an in-person meeting is scheduled. Article VII, Convention, Section 4 Representation of Local Member Leagues. Delete the words ...previous January 1 or previous year reporting date and insert the reporting date required by LWVUS. Article VIII Nominations and Elections. Section 2. Addition of a new sentence. Rotating the Presidency from one portion of the National Capital Area to another may be considered in nominating the president along with other desirable qualities for leadership as well as technical qualifications defined in these Bylaws. Article IX Program, Section 6. Member League Action change the wording in the first sentence from NCA to the NCA President.

NCA Convention is May 9 at the Ft. Myers Officer's Club. Program studies for 2009-2011 to be adopted include a *Water Resources Update* and *Adequacy and Reliability of Electricity in the NCA Area*. All current positions are to be retained.

STATE – LWV-VA

We've Reached Consensus!

The LWV-VA Board confirmed that the local Leagues reached consensus on a new position regarding Restoration of the Civil Rights of Felons in Virginia. The committee chaired by Molly McClenon proposed the following position to be included in Positions for Action:

- Civil rights of felons in Virginia should be restored automatically either upon their release from incarceration or upon completion of probation or parole.
- The procedure should be identical for all felons, regardless of the nature of their crime.
- The process should be easy to understand, accessible, transparent, and fair.
- Information about the process should be available to felons, the justice and correction system, and the general public.

Prepare for Convention: Proposed LWV-VA Bylaws Amendments

Proposed amendments to the LWV-VA Bylaws will be posted on the Members Only website along with other convention material. (This was sent via e-mail last month to LWVLC members. Contact Marla McIntyre for the link). The 2009 proposed amendments will be discussed and considered at the State Convention and include: changes to allow electronic decision making for Board, yearly budgets rather than two year budgets, and changes to comply with LWVUS Bylaws involving membership types.

LWVDC is hosting an Anacostia River Trip on May 2, 2009 beginning at 11:00 am. A \$25 donation is requested. Starting point is Bladensburg Waterfront Park, 4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD 20710. Learn about the historical, natural, political, and clean up programs that directly impact the Anacostia River. With a guided tour of the river by a naturalist, visitors will get a first-hand impression of what the League can do to help clean up the Anacostia River. During the 5-mile tour, you will get information about water quality monitoring, past and present uses, and insights into what is needed now to restore the Anacostia River to a healthy condition. Bring binoculars – there is always a chance of spotting bald eagles, beavers, egrets, fish, great blue herons, and turtles that make their home along the Anacostia wetlands. Please reserve by April 27. Contact Geraldine Whitle, jacksonwhitley@aol.com or the LWVDC office at lwvdc@aol.com, 202-222-0710 for registration information. Please send your check (made payable to **LWVDC**), and form to: LWVDC – River Boat Tour, 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20036



If you have any doubts that we live in a society controlled by men, try reading down the index of contributors to a volume of quotations, looking for women's names. — Elaine Gill

*LWV Loudoun County Annual Meeting
June 28*



Board of Directors National League of Women Voters Chicago Convention, February 1920
Top row: left to right: Miss Katherine Ludington, Hartford, Conn. Director 1st region;
Mrs. Richard Edwards, Peru, Indiana, treasurer; Miss Della Dorth, Nashville, Tenn.,
director 3rd region; Mrs. George Gellhorn, St. Louis, MO. Vice chairman and director 6th
region; Mrs. James Paige, Minneapolis, Minn., director 5th region; Mrs. Solon Jacobs,
Birmingham, Ala., secretary. Lower row: left to right: Mrs. Maud Wood Park, Boston,
President 1920-24; Mrs. Grace Wilbur Trout, Chicago, chairman hostess committee; Mrs.
Carrie Chapman Catt, New York, honorary chairman.



I would venture to guess that Anon, who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman. — Virginia Woolf



The question has been asked, "What is a woman?" A woman is a person who makes choices. A woman is a dreamer. A woman is a planner. A woman is a maker, and a molder. A woman is a person who makes choices. A woman builds bridges. A woman makes children and makes cars. A woman writes poetry and songs. A woman is a person who makes choices. You cannot even simply become a mother anymore. You must choose motherhood. Will you choose change? Can you become its vanguard? – Eleanor Holmes Norton

2009 Calendar

April

- 13 Mon. 7:00 – 9:00 pm LWVLC Board of Directors,
Tuskies, Leesburg (All members welcome to attend)
- 20 Mon. 7:00 - 9:00 pm Unit Meeting – National Popular Vote
Leesburg Airport Conference Room

May

- 1 Fri 10:30-12:30 NCA Board Meeting
LWVUS Office, 1730 M St 10th Floor, Washington DC
- 1 LWVVA Board Meeting
- 1 LWVUS NPV Study Consensus Deadline
- 2-3 Sat-Sun LWVVA Convention
Sheraton, Reston, VA
- 9 Sat 9:30-12:30 NCA Annual Meeting
Ft. Myer Officers Club, Ft. Myer, VA
- 18 Mon. 7:00 – 9:00 pm LWVLC Board of Directors,
Tuskies, Leesburg (All members welcome to attend)

June

- 5 Fri 10:30-12:30 NCA Board Meeting
LWVUS Office, 1730 M St 10th Floor, Washington DC
- 13 LWVUS Council (via Conference Call)
- 15 Mon. 7:00 – 9:00 pm LWVLC Board of Directors,
Tuskies, Leesburg (All members welcome to attend)
- 28 Sun. LWV Loudoun County Annual Meeting
National Conference Center, Leesburg, VA

July

- 20 Mon. 7:00 – 9:00 pm LWVLC Board of Directors,
Tuskies, Leesburg (All members welcome to attend)



The heyday of woman's life is the shady side of fifty.

Truth is the only safe ground to stand upon.

– Elizabeth Cady Stanton

Ask a Friend to Join the League of Women Voters of Loudoun County
Please add my voice to over 120,000 members and supporters nationwide!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

_____ \$60 Individual or _____ \$90 Family (Make dues checks payable to: LWVLC)

- Please send the LWV Voter Newsletter by e-mail. *(Please provide your current e-mail address)*
- Please send notifications of League activities by e-mail. *(Please provide your current e-mail)*
- I want to support the League of Women Voters of Loudoun County with a donation so it can continue its work to promote informed participation in government. Enclosed is my donation of \$_____.

Please make donation checks payable to **LWVLC Education Fund**.
Contributions to the LWVLC Education Fund are tax deductible within the limits of the law.
Mail dues and donations to: Hatsy Cutshall, Treasurer LWVLC
20371 Cockerill Rd.
Purcellville, VA 20132

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