



The Voter

League of Women Voters of Loudoun County - Fall 2016

President's Message



Now with the Conventions concluded, it is time for us to get to work on voter registration. The State has recently redone the voter registration form and we are waiting to get 100 copies to use in our registration efforts this fall.

Everyone who will be participating is encouraged to go online and get "certified" for third party registration. This is easily done with a short video introducing the new form. Once we have the forms, we will be setting up registration at libraries and possibly grocery stores in August and September..

elections.virginia.gov/registration/registration-drives/index.html

Election 2016 Deadlines. Last day to register to vote is October 17; Absentee Voting Starts September 23; Deadline to request a ballot by mail is November 1, 2016 and Deadline to Vote in Person Absentee is November 5, 2016. Don't miss your voting opportunity; please keep these deadlines in mind.

The League has been asked to present a program on the election and on the history of the League of Women Voters Saturday, September 17 at 3:30 p.m. at the Purcellville library branch. All are welcome to attend.

Also, please tell your friends that the League of Women Voters has a special [Vote 411](http://Vote411.com) website that features complete information on the candidates who will be on your ballot and their answers to a few questions posed by League members.

New Members & Old. Thank You to the wonderful hardworking board members who are rotating off the board to new projects: B.J. Beyer, Hatsy Cutshall, Ellen Heald, Denise Moore Pierce. Hatsy Cutshall (the daughter of Jean Sagin, a former LWV-LC president and 50 year member) has followed in her mother's proud footsteps for many years as Treasurer of the LWV-LC Board. We will miss all of you and thank you for your service.

We welcome new members always! Our Annual Meeting & Luncheon in April brought new members and new leadership. Our new membership chair is Mary Peskin and our new treasurer

is Joan Kowalski. Please come to our board meeting and meet them in person! Our next meeting is Monday, August 15 at 6:30 at Cascades Library, Sterling. All are welcome.

Annual Meetings & Conventions. The Board was very pleased with the big turnout at our Annual Meeting & Luncheon at the River Creek Club in Leesburg. The event was not only very well attended, but the food was excellent and our speaker, Dr. Wylecia Wiggs Harris, was superb. We have no doubt that under her leadership the League of Women Voters U.S. will grow.

I was able to volunteer at the League of Women Voters' National Convention in D.C. and all the convention attendees were equally impressed with Dr. Harris as the new executive director. The National Capital Area League was able to contract with the Capitol Steps for a performance that was very well received. Our League was a beneficiary of this unique fundraiser as the proceeds from the performance were distributed to the Leagues in the national capital area.

We also attended the Virginia League Council meeting June 4, 2016 outside Richmond. Meetings were focused on the millennial generation and how to get them engaged with the League and with voting in general. If this year does not excite them, nothing will!

Current Issues Before Us. Our focus for this fall will be voter registration and education.

We continue to be concerned with the potential changes to the County's Comprehensive Plan and are keeping a sharp eye on those meetings. We spoke out against the over-development of property south of Route 50 within the "transition area" which is supposed to be less dense and less developed. We will let you know how that turns out later this year. We're also planning programs for next spring on such issues as nonpartisan redistricting, money in politics, and other important issues.

Stay tuned for announcements regarding voter registration dates and locations!

Priscilla Godfrey
President

"DON'T BOO, VOTE!" – National & Local Elections –NOVEMBER 8

Join Us for National Voter Registration Day 2016 – September 27.

Help us register new voters! LWV-LC will register voters in our county during National Voter Registration Day, September 27. For the past four years, the League of Women Voters has been one of the single-largest, on-the-ground partners registering new voters. We are joining more than 225 other Leagues nationwide and county partnering organizations who have signed up to participate!

We are in the midst of planning more voter registration activities with other groups like the NAACP, New Virginia Majority, and Mobile Hope (August 2), among other groups reaching out to underserved populations in Loudoun County. Our schedule will be announced soon. If you'd like to join our initiative, please contact Priscilla Godfrey, godfreyblueridge@gmail.com.

Fall Election Deadlines

Monday, October 17 – deadline to register to vote

Friday, September 23 – absentee voting starts

Tuesday, November 1— deadline to request a ballot by mail

Saturday, November 5 – deadline to vote in person absentee

Election Day – Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Candidate Forums. LWV-LC is planning three public candidate “meet and greet” forums for this fall. All will be free and open to the public, and will be moderated by local media personality.

- **Thursday, September 15 - Leesburg Town Mayoral Candidates at Rust Library, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** Three candidates are running for a term of two years. David Butler (incumbent), Kelly Burk (D), and Kevin Wright (R).
- **Thursday, September 22 – Leesburg Town Council Candidates at Rust Library, 7:00-8:30 p.m.** Six candidates are running for two-year terms on the Council: Ron Campbell, Thomas Dunn (incumbent), Katie Hammler (incumbent), John Hilton, Evan Macbeth, Gwen Pangle
- **Tuesday, October 18 – 10th District Congressional Candidate Forum – Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun Campus, HEC Building, 7 – 8:30 p.m.** Meet and greet the two candidates running for this seat on the U.S. House of Representative: LuAnn Bennett (D) and Barbara Comstock (R, incumbent). Voters can meet the candidates and ask them questions about issues in your communities.

For all of these forums, LWV-LC needs help with set up, clean up, and other logistics. If you can participate, please contact Betsy Mayr, emayr59433@aol.com.

For further information about the candidates and their views, go to www.Vote411.org. For more information about this event, go to <http://loudoun.va.lwvnet.org/>.

On the Ballot – Voting Issues

Two Proposed Constitutional Amendments will be voted on in the November 8 Election.

This is the second of the two consecutive years these amendment have been on the ballot before being instituted. For full text on these constitutional amendments, [click here](#).

Ballot Question #1 - Article I. Bill of Rights. Section 11-A. Right to work.

Question: Should Article I of the Constitution of Virginia be amended to prohibit any agreement or combination between an employer and a labor union or labor organization whereby (i) nonmembers of the union or organization are denied the right to work for the

employer, (ii) membership to the union or organization is made a condition of employment or continuation of employment by such employer, or (iii) the union or organization acquires an employment monopoly in any such enterprise?

Explanation

Present Law

Currently, Virginia's right to work law, § 40.1-59 of the Code of Virginia, provides that any agreement or combination between an employer and a labor union or labor organization whereby (i) nonmembers of the union or organization are denied the right to work for the employer, (ii) membership in the union or organization is made a condition of employment or continuation of employment by such employer, or (iii) the union or organization acquires an employment monopoly in any such enterprise is against public policy and illegal. This has been the law and the declared public policy of the Commonwealth since 1947.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment places the provisions of Virginia's right to work law into the Constitution of Virginia. While Virginia law may be amended by any future General Assembly, a constitutional prohibition can only be changed by a future constitutional amendment approved by the voters.

Ballot Question #2 - *Article X. Taxation and Finance. Section 6-B. Property tax exemptions for spouses of certain emergency services providers.*

Question: Shall the Constitution of Virginia be amended to allow the General Assembly to provide an option to the localities to exempt from taxation the real property of the surviving spouse of any law-enforcement officer, firefighter, search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical services personnel who was killed in the line of duty, where the surviving spouse occupies the real property as his or her principal place of residence and has not remarried?

Explanation

Present Law

Article X, Section 6-A of the Constitution of Virginia now requires the General Assembly to exempt from taxation the real property, including the joint real property of husband and wife, of any veteran with a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability, as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the real property of the surviving spouse of an eligible veteran. This exemption from taxation applies to the principal place of residence of the eligible veteran or of the surviving spouse of an eligible veteran. The exemption ceases if the surviving spouse remarries.

Article X, Section 6-A of the Constitution of Virginia also authorizes the General Assembly to exempt from taxation the real property of the surviving spouse of any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who was killed in action, as determined by the U.S. Department of Defense. This exemption from taxation applies to the surviving spouse's principal place of residence, and the exemption ceases if the surviving spouse remarries.

Proposed Amendment

The proposed constitutional amendment authorizes the General Assembly to enact a law that would allow a locality to exempt from taxation the real property of the surviving spouse of any law-enforcement officer, firefighter, search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical services personnel who is killed in the line of duty. The exemption from taxation would cease if the surviving spouse remarries.

The exemption would apply regardless of whether the spouse was killed in the line of duty prior to the effective date of this amendment but would apply only to those real property taxes to be paid on or after the effective date of this amendment. The exemption from taxation would apply to the surviving spouse's principal place of residence, even if he or she moves to a new principal place of residence. The exemption would not require the surviving spouse to have been residing in the Commonwealth at the time his or her spouse was killed in the line of duty.

The proposed constitutional amendment authorizes the General Assembly to prescribe additional restrictions and conditions on the exemption from taxation if enacting such a law.

LWV-VA Announces Fall Workshop & Event

Save the Date! Saturday, September 17

Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 1793 Richmond Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22911.

For more information on either of these programs, <http://lwv-va.org/>

Plan to spend a day in Charlottesville with League members from all over the state from 9:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. to share League ideas and strategies to deal with this very important election year. Tentative plans are for issue workshop topics to include:

- Help with Vote411.org issues
- Update on the Gun Safety Task Force
- Sharing of the Fracking Study Committee's information in preparation for consensus consideration
- Further training in the use of electronic media – especially focused on local League webmasters
- Constitutional Amendment Pros & Cons,
- New Electronic Voter Registration, and
- Non-partisan 'talking points' for this historic election

Celebrate Women's Equality Day at Gunston Hall, August 26

The Turning Point Suffragist Memorial Association and Gunston Hall, home of George Mason, jointly are pleased to invite you the Program will include a video and lecture about suffragist martyr Inez Milholland Boissevain as well as how the Constitution and Bill of Rights affected women during the Suffragist Movement and today.



Nationally renowned historian, Edith Mayo, Curator Emeritus in Political and Women's History at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, will be presenting. Please join us and learn more about the suffragist movement, George Mason and the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial project. Light refreshments will be served and the program will begin promptly at 7 pm.

Friday, August 26, 2016 from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM, Gunston Hall - 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton, VA 22079, COST \$10.00

Join LWV-LC

Are you or someone you know passionate about voter education and preserving voter rights? If so, forward this newsletter and bring her or him to one of the fall candidate meet and greets. Dues are \$60 per year or \$90 for family. [Click here](#) for a membership application. For more about the LWVLC and its Public Policies, [click here](#).

LWV-LC Board of Directors

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The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy, never supporting or opposing any political party or candidate. Formed in 1946, the Loudoun League was the first rural League of Women Voters (LWV) in Virginia. www.loudoun.va.lwvnet.org, P.O. Box 822, Leesburg, VA 20176, 571-233-5884.

You are receiving this newsletter because you are a member or supporter of the League of Women Voters of Loudoun County. We appreciate your support!

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