



Charlottesville/Albemarle
League of Women Voters
Newsletter
December 2011/January 2012

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Tues. 10:00 am to 2:00 pm
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Emerald Young, Office Manager

Visit Our Website:
lww.avenue.org

LWV C/A December Community Dialogue

Program Planning

Tuesday, December 6, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm

New County Office Building, 1600 Fifth St.

For Lunch Reservations, box lunch \$8, contact the office, 970-1707,
by Thursday, December 1.

All members *as well as the public* are encouraged to attend the annual Program Planning meeting scheduled for Tuesday, December 6, at 11:30 am, at the New County Office Building, 1600 Fifth St. At this time, we will consider Program Planning at the Local and National levels of the League. Do we wish to retain current positions, to act on them, and/or to begin new studies with the goal of establishing consensus and positions for action on other issues? This is what your League of Women Voters is all about and program planning is your opportunity to weigh in. You can find a list of local positions in our **2011-2012 Membership Directory**. For details about positions at the national level, go to our website, lww.avenue.org, and click on LWVUS on the home page, then "Impact on Issues, on the LWVUS page. For further information, contact President Pat Hurst, 978-4532, or email: phurst@embarqmail.com.

Lunch with the Legislators
Friday, January 6, 2012, Noon
The Boar's Head Inn

The state legislators who represent Charlottesville and Albemarle County have been invited to attend the annual League of Women Voters Legislative Luncheon at the Boar's Head Inn, on Friday, January 6, at noon. Now we need you, your friends and relatives to join us. Don't miss this annual opportunity for listening carefully and speaking directly to our local representatives before the legislative session begins. Each legislator will give a brief presentation and then respond to questions from the audience. Registration deadline: Friday, December 30.

See page 3 of this newsletter for reservation information.
And invite a friend to join you!

This page is sponsored by Joan Jay of Roy Wheeler Realty Co.

President's Message ***ERA Dead or Alive***

Until October, I would have said that the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was dead. Furthermore, I would have said that for it to become an amendment to the U.S. Constitution it would have to be resurrected as a new amendment through the U.S. Congress and the ratification process would have to start all over again. I would have been wrong. The ERA is very much alive. Events in October led me to research the current status of the ERA and to make a statement to our local government bodies. I want to share this with you.

In October, the Charlottesville National Organization for Women (CNOW) asked our league to support a resolution they had proposed to the Charlottesville City Council and to the Albemarle Board of Supervisors. By approving the resolution each body would (1) indicate their support for the principle that "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex" and (2) would urge the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia to ratify the ERA during the 2012 session.

After researching the question of whether such a resolution would have any practical meaning or whether it would be only symbolic of the principle behind the ERA, I discovered it would have practical meaning and it was indeed something that our League should support. With Board approval, similar statements were presented to the City Council on October 17 and to the Board of Supervisors on November 2. The statement follows.

My name is Pat Hurst, President of the League of Women Voters of Charlottesville and Albemarle County.

On behalf of the League, I urge the City Council to pass the Resolution before you regarding the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

The ERA affirms that women and men have equal rights under the law. It was first introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1923, and it was introduced every year thereafter until it passed in 1972 and was sent to the states for ratification. By the deadline for ratification, as extended by Congress under public pressure, 35 states had ratified the ERA falling three short of the required 38. The year was 1982.

Over the years since, support for the ERA has remained high and the traditional process of passage could be restarted with a new Amendment being passed by Congress. Along these lines, the ERA has been introduced in every session of Congress since 1982.

Does that mean that the ERA as passed in 1972 is no longer viable? That we have to start all over again? That the resolution presented to you is symbolic? The answer is no, no, and no. The ERA as passed is still in play and your resolution would have meaning beyond symbolism.

The precedence is the "Madison Amendment," the 27th Amendment of the Constitution concerning changes in Congressional pay. Passed by Congress in 1789, it was ratified 203 years later in 1992. Using this precedence, the Congressional Research Service in 1996 found support for the premise that approval of the ERA by three more states could allow Congress to declare ratification accomplished.

Indeed, in March of this year, a House Resolution was introduced which would remove the ERA's ratification deadline and make it part of the Constitution when three more states ratify.

Ratification bills testing the Madison-Amendment strategy have been introduced in eight states, including Virginia. In the 2011 session, the Virginia Senate passed a resolution (SJ357) ratifying the ERA, but it was tabled in a House Committee that year. We now look to the 2012 session for the House as our next opportunity to pass this resolution.

The League of Women Voters has strongly supported the ERA Amendment to the U.S. Constitution passed by Congress in 1972.

We urge you to show support for the principle that women and men have equal rights under the law and to vote affirmative on the Resolution before you.

Thank you.

Both of our local governing bodies passed the Resolution. Learning that the ERA still remains viable certainly lifted my spirits and I hope it has yours.

Pat Hurst
President, LWV C/A

Annual Legislative Luncheon
Friday, January 6, 2012
The Boar's Head Inn
New Pavilion Ballroom
Registration at 11:30 am
Luncheon/Program begins at Noon

Join us for the annual get-together with our local state legislators. At this time **Sen.-elect Bryce Reeves (17th District), Sen. Emmett Hanger (24th), Sen. Creigh Deeds (25th), Del. Steve Landes (25th), Del. David Toscano (57th), Del. Rob Bell (58th), and Del.-elect Matt Fariss (59th) have been invited to attend**, and this is a great opportunity to hear what they have to say about the upcoming legislative session in Richmond, as well as query them with informed questions.

This year's luncheon (\$30 per plate) will be held in the Pavilion ballroom at The Boar's Head Inn. The menu is:

Chef's Soup of the Day
Fresh House Rolls and Butter

A Hearty Chef-selected Salad

Pastry Chef's Selection of Dessert

Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee with a Selection of Hot Teas

Iced Tea with Lemon

Email lwv@avenue.org or call 970-1707; or Lois Sandy ljsandy@gmail.com or 296-8737 by noon on **Friday, December 30** to make reservations for luncheon.

NOTE: The Boar's Head will accommodate diners with special dietary needs if notified in advance. (ie: vegetarian, gluten free)

Cost of Lunch: \$30.

Make your check out to the LWV and mail it to the office: **(note our new address)**

League of Women Voters
1932 Arlington Blvd. #111
Charlottesville, VA 22903-1559

Yes, I plan to attend the Legislative Luncheon on Friday, January 6, at the Boar's Head Inn.

Enclosed is \$30 per plate for reservations for:

Name(s) _____ Telephone _____

_____ Telephone _____

_____ Telephone _____

International Relations/Federal Government News by Gerry Kruger

At the beginning of our October 26th meeting **Liz Kuchai** passed around three graphic representations. One was an illustration of the role that education plays in who is elected. Some believe that states with the most educated voters will be the key to victory for the Democratic Party in the 2012 presidential election. The other two graphics dealt with the rapid decline in job growth in the 2000's, along with a sharp decline in household income since 2008. The sharpest decline, however, occurred after the recession ended.

Jean Minehart's report on the Middle East gave valuable insight into this perplexing region and the part that religion plays there. Although the Arab League forbids member states from fighting with each other, the Sunni and Shia in this part of the world are a source of constant conflict. There are 1.3 billion Muslims in the world, of which 85-90% are Sunni. The Shia, the minority of Muslims and also the most conservative, are said to be direct descendants of Mohammad. They consider U.S decadence to be the greatest threat to world peace.

Marge Cox presented a series of alternative energy sources with both their benefits and drawbacks. Her report illustrated how more research and innovation with an emphasis on eliminating the negative effects of these alternatives may some day solve our energy crisis. The basic research that is being done by universities is being supported in part by the federal government.

Natatie Testa gave us an update on the Millennium 2011 Meeting. It is predicted that the 2015 millennium goals will not be met due to natural disasters and famine. Also US aid will be cut due to the actions of the deficit committee that is currently meeting.

The Million Moms Challenge is a way of utilizing ordinary moms to promote world health initiatives. The idea behind the Challenge is to solicit a large bank of names of people who will sign up for the challenge. Johnson and Johnson will donate one dollar for every signature that is solicited. Then when letters about world health issues are written, the signatures will be used.

The issues that the advocacy committee will focus on are health care defense, clean air defense, money in elections, and election administration.

Leslie Wilcox gave us an in-depth look into Australia and its insulation from the Great Recession of 2008. They took a number of precautionary steps that served them well during the crises that the US and Europe suffered. One such step was an agreement among the four major banks that they would not take each other over. They also built up reserves, and companies did not lay off workers when production decreased. Their abundance of natural resources has contributed to their wealth as well as their relationship with China. In spite of their financial standing, Australia faces a number of problems due to drought, water shortage, air pollution, and a substandard educational system.

Shirley Munson gave us an intriguing, but alarming report on the last great global warming that took place millions of years ago. Scientists have determined that global warming that is taking place now is happening at a much faster rate due to extensive carbon that is being released. We need to act quickly in order to slow this rate.

The League of Women Voters-Charlottesville/Albemarle, having recently completed The Education Study, will now participate in the Privatization Study. The International Relations/ Federal Government Committee will be devoting some of their meetings to the study of this issue. We welcome anyone to join us as we begin this new study and continue with other important topics as well. See the calendar on the back of this newsletter for dates, times, and places.

*Season's Greetings and Happy New Year from your
League of Women Voters of Charlottesville/Albemarle*



League of Women Voters of Charlottesville/Albemarle: 2011 LWV-US Education Study Consensus Report

Key: **Red = Study Questions** **Green = Study Answer Choices** **Black=LWV C/A Responses**

General Questions (1-3)

- 1) **The current role of the federal government in public education is: (choose one)**
Much too small, too small, about right, too large, much too large
no consensus
- 2) **What should be the role of the federal government in public education? (rank)**
 - a. to ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education
 - b. to develop accountability measures that will study the progress of all students so that they achieve adequate yearly progress
 - c. to mandate Common Core Standards for all students K-12
 - d. to monitor State efforts for funding
 - e. to measure teacher effectiveness through test dataa,c,b,d,e
- 3) **A quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy. (choose one)**
Strongly agree, agree, no consensus, disagree, strongly disagree
Strongly agree

Comments: Q1 – the role is too large in areas like NCLB (punitive) and too small in areas like funding –there have been a “no consensus” choice like questions 3 & 13-15

Q2 – would prefer different language – “could” rather than should; “promote” rather than ensure; “develop” rather than mandate; found the ranking order very leading! For “c”, do not want mandates. Core objectives are OK, but not performance objectives.

Common Core Standards (4-9)

- 4) **Currently the governors and state education officers have developed Common Core Standards that are national but not federal. Should the standards be mandated of the states in order to obtain federal funding? (choose one)**
 - a. special grant programs such as Race to the Top
 - b. all programs under Elementary and Secondary Education Act where the needs qualify for funding
 - c. all programs receiving federal funding from any source
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the abovee, with minority opinion on c
- 5) **Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common core standards? (yes or no)**

If yes, should implementation be voluntary or federally mandated?

 - a. voluntary
 - b. mandated
 - c. mandated, if fully funded

If no, what other accountability measures might you suggest?

 - a. continue to allow the states to develop their own assessments
 - b. suggest that the local education districts use their own assessments or adopt on that is a nationally norm-referenced assessment such as the Stanford Achievement Test or Iowa Test of Basic Skills
 - c. suggest that the districts use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically

No, b

- 6) National standards should lead to: (choose one)
- a. a nationally mandated curriculum to be aligned to the national standards and assessments
 - b. a national curriculum that is only suggested but not mandated
 - c. a suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum
 - d. no national curriculum
- c, with strong b minority opinion
- 7) What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation? (rank)
- a. provide an assessment system that is aligned to the common Core Standards
 - b. provide comparison data showing progress toward reaching Common Core Standards
 - c. provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers
 - d. provide information to students, parents teachers and school districts about student achievement
 - e. provide diagnostic information on each child
- a,d,b,c,e
- 8) Data from the national assessments are often difficult for parents, teachers and other to understand. If we have a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community? (choose one)
- a. data should be “norm referenced” (where students are ranked) for district comparison only
 - b. data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative so that teachers, parents, and students know how individual students have mastered criteria established at a national level
 - c. data should be used to determine “cut” scores knowing students have mastered requirements for special grade levels
- b
- 9) Information from nationally required assessment data should be used to: (choose one)
- a. sanction schools not measuring up to the specific levels
 - b. reward schools that receive high scores
 - c. rank teachers based on student test score data
 - d. reward teacher who have exemplary scores
 - e. inform district how their population compares to others similar to theirs
- e

Comments: Q4 - we have a problem with mandates, believing that standards should be voluntary; there was some agreement on “c”

Q5 - if the consensus is yes, then we again prefer that they be voluntary

Q7 – there was some preference for “d” as the first choice; again, we feel that the listing of choices is very leading.

Funding and Equity (10-15)

- 10) In the past most of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding has been non-competitive based on need. All/Any schools that prove the fall under the federal guidelines for funding receive those funds. However, competitive grants, such as Race to the Top, are now being proposed to states/districts who meet certain federal requirements. Which would be appropriate? (choose one)
- a. non-competitive funding for all applicants meeting requirements
 - b. a combination of non-competitive and competitive grants
 - c. competitive grants only
 - d. no federal funding
- b
- 11) If the federal government’s role is the concern of the “common good” then: (choose one)
- a. mandates only should be sanctioned
 - b. mandates and funding should both be provided
 - c. funding should be provided through grants only
 - d. a combination of funded mandates and grants should apply
 - e. no mandates should be required and limited grants for innovation available
- d

12) Equity in public education means equitable access to: (rank)

- a. high quality teaching/learning
- b. adequate and current learning materials
- c. clean and well maintained physical facilities
- d. food and health care
- e. safe and secure neighborhoods
- f. secure housing

a,b,c,d,e,f

13) Currently Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) funding is considered “categorical” rather than for general use. This means that it can only be used with special populations for special purposes. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs. (choose one)

strongly agree, agree, no consensus, disagree, strongly disagree

Strongly agree

14) The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children. (choose one)

strongly agree, agree, no consensus, disagree, strongly disagree

Strongly agree

15) Federal support for early childhood education programs (e.g. Head Start, Title I, Special Education and Early Start) should include funding for parent education and support regarding child development, child health and nutrition, and access to other supportive services, such as mental health as needed. (choose one)

a. strongly agree, agree, no consensus, disagree, strongly disagree

Strongly agree

This funding should be extended to: (choose one)

All children, only those with special needs, special needs first

All children

Comments: Q10 – competitive grants should be a lower priority, and non- competitive grants should focus on need. Q11 – recognize that not all mandates can be fully funded; health and safety issues should be mandated. Q12 – again, being lead in the rankings; given that, there was minority opinion that food and health care should be a greater priority; also some concern that d, e, & f are not school division responsibilities.

November, 2011

*Addenda to the 2011-12 LWV C/A
Membership Directory*

The following members should be added/corrected:

Bonner, Nancy, 296-4233, 3383 Duncroft Ct., Keswick, 22947. Email: nmbonner@comcast.net

Colony, Joyce, 296-1923, 3520 Glenaire Dr., 22901

Engelhard, Carolyn, 200 Douglas Ave., Unit 1-A, 22902

Epstein, Lillian, 977-6411, 1929 Blue Ridge Rd., 22903

Ogilvie, Bev, 823-4597, 365 Normandy Dr., 22903

Yates, Kerin, 964-1840

**Introducing New Member
Barbara Drake**

New member Barbara Drake moved to Charlottesville from Alexandria, Virginia, in July 2010, and has joined the League as a way to make new friends and to better understand local issues. Her husband Bob is a retired federal employee, and she is a Mary Kay Cosmetics Independent Beauty Consultant. The Drakes selected Charlottesville in order to be close to their son, daughter-in-law, and two (adorable) grandchildren. Barbara knits for fun and relaxation, volunteers with the Salvation Army, reads fiction and non-fiction, and enjoys playing bridge. For his second career Bob repairs Lionel toy trains. Barbara is interested in government at all levels and the impact on children and women.



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LWV C/A
President
 Patricia Hurst

Newsletter Editor
 Michele Kellermann

Meetings and Events for December 2011/January 2012: *Mark Your Calendars!*

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Tues., Dec. 6, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm	LWV C/A Program Planning: Local and National Positions	New County Office Bldg., 1600 Fifth St.	For lunch reservations (by Thurs. Dec. 1) and more information, contact the office, 970-1707
Thurs., Dec. 8. 9:30 - 3:00 pm	Women's Roundtable (WRT) Pre-session; Luncheon \$30	Richmond Capitol Bldg.	For more information, contact Sue Lewis, 295-1485
Tues., Dec. 13, 4 - 6 pm	LWV C/A Board Meeting	Virginia National Bank, Arlington Blvd.	For more information, contact Pat Hurst, 978-4532
Wed., Dec. 14, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Jean Minehart, 1714 Yorktown Dr., 971-1801	For further information, contact Molly O'Brien, 245-9806
Fri., Jan 6, Noon	Legislative Luncheon: Annual Meet and Greet Your Local Legislators	The Boar's Head Inn, Rt. 250, Ivy Rd.	For reservations (deadline is Dec. 30), contact the office, 970-1707
Tues., Jan. 10, 4 - 6 pm	LWV C/A Board Meeting	Virginia National Bank, Arlington Blvd.	For more information, contact Pat Hurst, 978-4532
Wed., Jan 11, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Molly O'Brien, 250 West Main, PH2, 245-9806	For further information, contact Molly O'Brien, 245-9806
Thurs., Jan. 12, 4:30 pm	Natural Resources Committee Meeting	Virginia Foundations for the Humanities, Boar's Head Inn complex, Ivy Rd.	For more information, contact Linda Goodling, 296-9865
Wed., Jan 25, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Shirley Munson, 3400 Indian Spring Rd., 973-4137	For further information, contact Molly O'Brien, 245-9806
Sat., Jan. 28, 9 am	Finance Drive 2012 Letter Writing Campaign Launched	Home of Ruth Wadlington, 1620 Keith Valley Rd., 293-5261	For more information, contact the office, 970-1707