



*Charlottesville/Albemarle*  
**League of Women Voters**  
 Newsletter  
 March 2011

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*March Consensus Meeting: Open to all LWV Members*

**"Election Laws: Part II"**  
**Tuesday, March 22, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm**  
**New County Office Building**  
**1600 Fifth Street, Room A**



**For Box Lunch Reservations (\$8), contact the League office by Thursday, March 17: (434) 970-1707 or email: [lwv@avenue.org](mailto:lwv@avenue.org)**

The 2009 League of Women Voters of Virginia Convention voted for an election laws update study to be conducted during the 2009-2011 biennium. During the first year, members reviewed Virginia's laws and practices regarding voter registration and the Commonwealth's management and funding of the election process. **This year, we look at the election process itself, both prior to and at the polls on Election Day.** After gathering members' conclusions about the election process in Virginia and any changes that they believe would improve and facilitate the process and increase voter turnout, the Board of Directors will approve a revised statement of positions.

All LWV C/A members are invited to attend the Consensus Meeting on Election Laws, Part II, on **Tuesday, March 22, at 11:30 am** at the **New County Office Building (Room A)**, 1600 Fifth St., Charlottesville. The **Consensus Questions** for this meeting are on **page 2 of this newsletter**. There are questions about *absentee ballots, polling hours and places, voting machines and internet voting, and recounts*. The LWV VA has prepared an excellent background report on this part of the study. To prepare for the meeting, you will want to read this report which can be found by going to the LWV VA website and clicking on "Election Laws Study," <http://lwv-va.org/studies.html> If you are unable to access this website, a copy of the report is available at the League office by calling, 970-1707.

**Consensus is a prerequisite to the League's taking any position on national, state, or local governmental issues. Please join us for this very important meeting to fortify the League's role in today's volatile political world.** As LWV VA President Olga Hernandez comments in conclusion to the **Election Laws Study Report**:

*As this study points out, our elections are run through a complex and intricate system at various levels, depending on the election. Each level has separate rules and timelines. The election system needs constant attention to keep up with changing laws and technology, all of which are expensive. Voters don't really think about the system until they are at the polls; by that time it's late. Election officials in all capacities and levels need constant training, which costs money. In Virginia, the state election operation has endured many budget cuts even as the population and frequency of elections have grown. **The League is often the only group that ever advocates to legislators for better processes and the need for realistic funding.** Elections are how we run our democracy, and the system must be strong to make it beyond reproach. Citizens also need transparency and some uniformity to ensure that elections are administered evenly across the state. Citizens who understand how the system works can have confidence that their vote counts and are more likely to participate.*

*This page is sponsored by Joan Jay of Roy Wheeler Realty*

## LWV-VA Consensus Questions: Election Laws Update Study, Part 2

1. a. What measures do you support to facilitate voting at the polls on Election Day? Select all applicable:

- Use of electronic poll books
- Well-trained election officers
- Ratio of machines per registered voters that will decrease likelihood of long lines at most times on Election Day
- Maximum precinct size that will decrease likelihood of long lines at most times on Election Day
- Change or extend hours that the polls are open: If yes, provide suggested hours and reason for selection.
- Polling place locations convenient to any public transportation and designed to maximize voting participation
- Exercising the State-wide authority that allows use of split shifts and closing specialists at the polls
- Other:

b. What is the role of the State to ensure consistency with regard to these measures?

2. Do you support legislation that would allow the Courts to extend the hours that the polls are open in the case of disasters or other emergencies that prevent voters from getting to the polls? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_. Explain.

3. What types of absentee or early voting do you support for all voters in Virginia, i.e., not just military and overseas voters? Select all applicable. Explain if necessary.

- No excuse absentee voting: by mail \_\_\_\_\_ in person \_\_\_\_\_
- Permanent no excuse absentee voting by mail
- Localities to exercise the State-wide option to use satellite absentee voting facilities for several weeks prior to general elections in areas where distance and inadequate transportation facilities make it difficult for voters to get to a central elections office
- Localities to provide weekend and evening hours for voting at central and satellite voting offices for several weeks before general elections
- All-mail voting for: Federal general elections: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- State general elections: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Local (city, town) elections: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Special elections: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary elections: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered *yes* to any use of all-mail voting, should it be implemented state-wide or at the option of each local jurisdiction?

- Would you support a pilot program of all-mail voting? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you believe that increasing turnout and facilitating voting should be equal goals for adopting changes in the way that Virginia conducts elections? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain if necessary.

5. Do you support use of fax machines and e-mail attachments (or similar technology) to return voted absentee ballots from:

- Military and Overseas Voters? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain
- All absentee voters? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain

6. If proven safe and secure by a pilot program or programs, in either Virginia or other states, would you support using the Internet to vote? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain

7. Are you satisfied that the current law regarding recounts protects the rights of all/both candidates in close elections? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain if necessary.

8. Do you believe that party identification of candidates on the ballot should be extended to all partisan elections (those, such as constitutional officers and county boards of supervisors, in which candidates are chosen by political parties) in Virginia? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain if necessary.

**The Natural Resources Committee presents  
“Endangered: Public Participation in  
the Review Process”**

**Speaker: Morgan W. Butler**

**Thursday, March 10, at 4 pm to 5:45 pm**

**Gordon Ave. Library**

**North Room (basement room)**

The March 10 NRC meeting will be at the Gordon Avenue library basement room called the North Room from 4 pm to 5:45 pm. (Note the different start time from our usual monthly meetings.)

Morgan W. Butler, Senior Attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center, and leader of the SELC’s Charlottesville/Albemarle Project, **will discuss how various efforts underway to streamline the development review and approval process in the County could negatively impact opportunities for public participation.**

The meeting is open to the entire membership and we welcome your participation in this important discussion.

**Pat Hurst to Fill Position of  
LWV C/A President**

On January 31, 2011, Loren Intolubbe-Chmil resigned her position as president, effective immediately, and the Executive Board appointed Pat Hurst to fill her term. Pat has been Board secretary, and her term will be completed by Marge Cox until July 1.

**2011 Finance Drive Launched**

The Finance Drive mailing party was graced with the wonderful assistance of a robust group of volunteers, who were cheery, talkative, and efficient. The letters were processed in record time, there was much conversation and banter, sufficient goodies to keep up metabolisms....

Many thanks to **Molly O’Brien, Deborah Brooks, Michele Kellermann, Marge Cox, Kerin Yates, Gerry Kruger, Jane Foster, Wayne Harbaugh, Linda Goodling, Flora Paterson, Mimi Bender, Carol Jackson, and Liz Kutchai.** Well done, ladies! We’ll report on our success as checks come in.

**Ruth Wadlington, Finance Chair**

**International Relations Committee News** *by Gerry Kruger*

On January 26, 2011, the International Relations Committee met in the home of **Marian Rothman.** **Flora Patterson** explained the complex organization and numerous arms of the United Nations, which was formed in 1945 to prevent future wars. Much of her report focused on the International Monetary Fund. The United States is the largest contributor and most influential member of its 186 member countries.

**Shirley Munson** offered her home for our February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. **Molly O’Brien** discussed the surging food prices worldwide brought on by severe weather and the relationship between starving people and political unrest. Tunisia and Egypt are recent examples of what the future may hold for countries that are suffering from lack of food. **Gerry Kruger’s** report, “How to Live with Climate Change,” further emphasized the food shortage that will come with global warming’s severe drought and flooding. Climate change will also put the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in developing countries at risk. The focus of the latest United Nations Climate Change Conference was on how industrialized countries can help developing countries by providing technological as well as financial support.

Finally, **Liz Kutchai** compared how India and China are dealing with population growth and the challenges that each country faces. Although China has made a conscious effort to slow population growth, its population won’t stop growing until 2030. India is striving to improve an almost non-existent infrastructure. Only 29% of its population is urban and few roads are paved. Building roads and expanding seaports are among the projects they will fund. China, on the other hand, has a larger urban population (47%). With its political structure, it is easier in China to invest in infrastructure when the state controls such a large portion of the economy.

We welcome each of you to join us on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. as we gather in members’ homes. We also send a special thanks to Shirley Munson for frequently hosting our group. Check the back of this newsletter for meeting dates and times and contact Flora Patterson at 295-5532 for more information.



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The **League of Women Voters of Virginia's Spring 2011 newsletter** may be found on the LWV-VA website at:  
[http://lww-va.org/files/lwvavoter\\_spring11.pdf](http://lww-va.org/files/lwvavoter_spring11.pdf)

**League of Women Voters of Virginia Convention 2011**  
**Sat., April 30 - Sun., May 1, 2011**  
**Blacksburg Hilton Gardens Inn**  
Convention Registration due April 4; Hotel Registration due April 5  
For more information, go to <http://www.lww-va.org/>

**Meetings and Events for March 2011: *Mark Your Calendars Now!***

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Wednesday, March 9 9:30 am	International Relations Committee Meeting	Home of Molly O'Brien, 250 West Main St., Ph 2, 245-9806	For more information, contact Flora Patterson, 295-5532
<b>Thursday, March 10, 4 pm to 5:45 pm</b>	Natural Resources Committee Meeting: Morgan Butler, speaker	Gordon Ave. Library, North Room (basement room), Charlottesville	For more information, contact Linda Goodling, 296-9865
Monday, March 21, 4:00 pm	LWV C/A Board Meeting	Jordan Bldg., Pepsi Place (behind the Senior Center)	For more information, contact the office, 970-1707
Tuesday, March 22, <b>11:30 am</b> to 12:30 pm	LWV C/A Consensus Meeting (Open to all Members) "Election Laws Study, Part II"	New County Office Bldg., Fifth St., Room A	For box lunch reservations (\$8), call the office, 970-1707, by Thursday, March 17
Wednesday, March 23, 9:30 am	International Relations Committee Meeting	Home of Flora Patterson, 685 Flordon Dr., 295-5532	For more information, contact Flora Patterson, 295-5532