



Charlottesville Area
League of Women Voters
 Newsletter
 June/July 2015

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May 2015 LWV CVA Annual Meeting



Above: Guest Speaker Dahlia Lithwick, senior editor, *Slate*, addresses the 2015 Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area, on the importance and effects of the presence of women on the U.S. Supreme Court.
Below: Members and our speaker enjoy the lovely luncheon setting at The Greencroft Club.



2015 LWV CVA Annual Business Meeting Actions

Voted upon and accepted by the members present:

- Operating Budget for fiscal year, July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016
- Local Program for 2015-16 to remain unchanged as found in the current Membership Directory
- Slate of Officers, Directors and Committee Members as follows:

Officers: (2 years) 7-1-2015 to 6-30-2017:

Vice President: Sue Lewis

Treasurer: Rosalie Simari

Elected Directors: (2 years) 7-1-2015 to 6-30-2017:

Gerry Kruger - Community Engagement Portfolio

Dena Imlay - Voter Service Portfolio

Nominating Committee: (1 year) 7-1-2015 to 6-30-2016

Mimi Bender (chair), Natalie Testa, Lulu Williams

Mary Stamps White Committee: (3 years) 7-1-2015 to 6-30-2018
 Dena Imlay

For complete listing of LWV CVA Board of Directors, visit our website:

lww.avenue.org

*This page is sponsored by Joan Jay of Loring Woodriff Real Estate Associates
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President's Message: GOALS AND INTEGRITY

As a member of the LWV you are quite familiar with the problems of gerrymandering and our goal to eradicate it from our political scene. This past January our League held a community dialogue on redistricting in Virginia to help educate our citizens about gerrymandering. Our speakers at this particular event represented **OneVirginia2021**. OneVirginia2021 is a non-partisan grassroots effort devoted to change the redistricting process in Virginia. The LWV partnered with them to help disseminate redistricting /gerrymandering information.

On June 3 OneVirginia2021 director, Brian Cannon announced.....

"Today's a big day for our organization. As friends of OneVirginia2021, I wanted you all to be the first to know that we will be supporting candidates in two primaries with our 501(c)(4) organization. [They like our League have 501c4 and a 501c3 parts.] The primaries we're engaging in are competitive primaries where one candidate clearly stands up for redistricting reform and the others don't. We are acting in a bi-partisan manner consistent with our values and goals and have chosen a Republican and a Democrat." (See their website for the complete announcement.)

On June 3 Anne Sterling, president of the LWV –VA e-mailed the following press release:

—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE— JUNE 3, 2015, RICHMOND VA

The League of Women Voters of Virginia issues the following statement by President Anne Sterling:

"Despite my organization's strong support for OneVirginia2021, Virginians for Fair Redistricting, I wish to make clear that the League of Women Voters of Virginia dissociates itself from all candidate endorsements. Today's action by OneVirginia2021, supporting two candidates for the General Assembly, cannot be endorsed by LWV of Virginia or by any local LWV in the Commonwealth.

"A bedrock principle of the League of Women Voters is non-partisanship. We do not support or oppose candidates at any level, for any reason.

"The League of Women Voters will continue to participate in OneVirginia2021 activities aimed at educating the public about the need for redistricting reform. We must publicly step away, however, from the coalition's actions where they pertain to any candidates for office. I am asking my colleagues at state and local levels of the League of Women Voters to cooperate in disseminating this statement."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CALL (804) 521-4171 or go to www.lwv-va.org

On June 4 as your President I forwarded the press release to *The Daily Progress* , sent our Board Anne's message, and resigned the position I had on the 501c3 Board of OneVirginia2021. Our Board has not had an opportunity to discuss this together but we will. Until we are able to do this I urge our membership as individual citizens to continue to support change in Virginia's redistricting procedures.

Your comments and advice are welcome. Please contact any LWV CVA Board member or LWV-VA Board member.

Kerín Yates

President, LWV CVA

"Celebrating Jane and Gene Foster"

by Gerry Kruger, LWV CVA Community Engagement
Director

On May 9, 2015 the League helped host a celebration of **Jane and Gene Foster, long time Charlottesville activists.** They belonged to numerous organizations that came together to honor their memory. Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents, Legal Aid and Justice Center, Virginia Organizing, Monticello Area Community Action Agency, the Charlottesville Democratic Party, and **the League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area** helped to organize the event.

Jane was a beloved and loyal member of the League of Women Voters. She attended every Community Dialogue that she could and later became a member of the International Relations/Federal Government Committee.

Jane's children and grandchildren attended the celebration as well as more than a hundred people, and all of us were inspired by the selfless life she and Gene led. Two of their children were born on an Indian reservation where Gene had practiced medicine. Whenever they saw a need to help others, they were there.

The celebration started with a walk for a living wage that began at the Drewary Brown Bridge, continued to the Marriott Hotel, and ended at the First Baptist Church on West Main Street. **Liz Kutchai, Jean Minehart, Lois Sandy, Karen Christiansen, and Gerry Kruger** set up voter registration in front of the church. This was followed by a luncheon at the church, where attendees shared fascinating stories that illustrated the important role Jane and Gene played in their lives.

Celebration of Sugar Hollow Dam Release into the Moorman's River

by Martha Levering, Natural Resources
Committee, LWV CVA

The "Friends of the Moorman's River" held a small celebration at the Sugar Hollow Dam to observe an increase in the release of water into the Moorman's River.

Under the DEQ Water Protection permit that was part of the Water Supply Plan (endorsed by our League) the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority (RWSA) must increase the release into the river below the dam when the new Ragged Mountain Reservoir reaches 52% full and we are just about there!

The RWSA opened the water spigot on Thursday, May 7, increasing the flow of water into the Moorman's River. The flow from the spigot at the base of the dam will double from one million gallons per day to two million gallons per day. This won't make much difference to the aquatic life in this wet spring, but come summer it will.

The event is historic for our area, and those with interest in our rivers and streams, and our future water supply may enjoy joining the Friends of the Moorman's River to witness first-hand the dramatic flow release increase.

The LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee meets monthly on the third Wednesday of the month--the next meeting is **June 17, 4:30 to 6:30 pm, at the "Virginia Foundation for the Humanities" conference room** (at the Boar's Head Inn complex). For more information, call Linda Goodling, 296-9865, or email: linniecg740@gmail.com



LWV CVA Hosts the Biennial Convention of the League of Women Voters of Virginia

Sue Lewis, LWV CVA vice-president and LWV-VA 1st vice-president, was the convention chair. LWV CVA had the following delegates at convention: **Molly O'Brien, Kerin Yates, Flo Marks, Michele Kellermann, Linda Goodling, Muriel Grim, Martha Levering, Rosali Simari, Susan Roberts, and Pat Hurst.**

LWV CVA members in coordination with Brenda Carswell (LWV-VA) handled arrangements:

**Sharon Beeler
Frances Schutz
Jean Hammond
Sally Thomas
Natalie Testa
Liz Kutchai
Sue Lewis**

As delegates were leaving on Sunday, the work of the greeters/arrangers received many thanks!

Sue Lewis was given an award by Peggy Appler, the **LWV US liaison**, for her Leadership. The new 2015-17 **LWV-VA** Board will have the following **LWV CVA** Leaguers: Sue Lewis (1st Vice President), Pat Hurst (Treasurer), and Frances Schutz (Program).

Convention Notes: Spirited discussion occurred on adoption of studies on uranium mining, and fracking. Fracking, which was put forth by our LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee, was voted to be a study by the **LWV-VA** for the following biennium. Resolutions were passed resolving that the **LWV-VA** (1) support "Ban the Box" efforts and (2) advocate strongly for laws at the state level that more effectively prevent domestic abusers and stalkers from purchasing, accessing or possessing firearms and for laws that require adults to bear the burden of injury, death, and damage when a child accesses an unsecured or improperly secured firearm.

Guest Speakers at the Convention included: Peggy Appler on league membership and leadership, and a panel discussion on Redistricting with Kristin Goss, moderator, Ellen Buchman, Mark Flynn and Nicholas Mueller. Secretary of the Commonwealth Levar Stoney spoke on the restoration of felon rights. At the Saturday evening banquet, Greg Buppert (Southern Environmental Law Center) spoke on fracking.

For a complete summary of the Convention, go to the LWV VA website, scroll down, and click on "Recap of

"Fracking Study" Proposed by LWV CVA Accepted at Convention

Delegates accepted at the 2015 LWV VA Convention the **recommended new study on "Fracking"** which has been worded as follows by LWV of the Charlottesville Area:

The current LWVVA natural resource positions do not address recent developments in Virginia of hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") and energy pipelines. Fracking affects health as well as natural resources. Fracking and pipeline effects go beyond the current LWVVA positions. LWV-VA recommends that it go forward as a new study under Natural Resources. " Pat Hurst, LWV CVA, will head the study group.

International Relations /Federal Government Committee News

by Gerry Kruger

April 22 was the perfect time for the International Relations/Federal Government Committee to meet at **Deborah Brooks'** home. It seemed that everything around her mountaintop home was in bloom!

Gerry Kruger began the program with a **report on “comfort women.”** They were women who the Japanese Imperial Army kidnapped and forced into prostitution for their soldiers before and during World War II. Recently the Japanese government has tried to have excerpts about this removed from an American college textbook.

One of the authors as well the publisher, McGraw Hill, was pressured to delete the passage. Nineteen American historians and college professors wrote a letter to their Japanese counterparts expressing their dismay “at recent attempts by the Japanese government to suppress statements in history textbooks both in Japan and elsewhere about the euphemistically named ‘comfort women.’”

In spite of the pressure from the Japanese government as well as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the authors and publisher of the textbook have refused to delete the passage.

Natalie Testa followed with an **update on Burma/Myanmar.** Fifty years ago when the military took over Burma, Burma was given the name Myanmar. Both names are still used, especially by the people of Burma themselves. It seems to symbolize freedom and democracy after military rule.

There are two sides to the situation in Burma—a hopeful side, because it is a democracy and held elections two years ago, and a violent side, exemplified by the killing of Muslims and the eviction of Doctors Without Borders. The problem is chiefly the multi-ethnic and multi-religious demographics. The majority are Buddhists, who want to rid the country of Muslims. Laws that provide protection for race and religion have been proposed, but not passed. Even though the country is supposed to be a democracy, no constitution has been written. The generals still hold the power and the leader, who was chosen by them, is under their control. He has not decided whether he will run in the upcoming election

On May 13 **Molly O'Brien** invited us to her lovely downtown home. **Becky Thomas reported on a review written by Mark Lielu, who is a Fellow at the Paris Institute of Advanced Studies.** The reviewer calls the book, *Le suicide francais* (The Suicide of France), which was published in October, 2014 and was the second best-seller of the year, “a steamroller of a book..”

The author Eric Zimmoar is a far right self-proclaimed prophet, who blames a large number of factors and groups for what he sees as a dying France. Chief among them are French Muslims and their power and influence, as well as laws that defend illegal immigrants. He also takes swings at the Jewish population, the euro, American power in NATO, abortion, feminism, left-wing journalists and professors, the educational establishment, and the French business class that have outsourced jobs.

The timing of the book was perfect for the author to substantiate some of his claims—just before 16 people were killed in the Charlie Hebdo attack and the kosher grocery store attack in Paris. Currently 16% of the French and 27% of those between the ages of 18 and 24 have a favorable or somewhat favorable view of ISIS. In fact, hundreds are leaving to join ISIS. Zimmoar offers no solutions. At the end of the book he says, “France is dying. France is dead.”

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International Relations/Federal Government Committee News

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Next **Kerin Yates** explained that China created the **Asian Infrastructural International Bank (AIIB)** for the purpose of loaning money to underdeveloped countries for building infrastructure. President Obama did not respond positively to China's invitation to join. Great Britain, Italy, France, and Germany all joined in spite of U.S. advice not to. Later he said their joining was acceptable, whereas the World Bank welcomed the new institution.

China has a very small percent of the vote in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; therefore, it has created its own bank in order to have more power.

Summer vacations meant a smaller than usual group met at **Gerry Kruger's** home on May 27. **Jean Minehart's** report "**Eastern Europe after Communism**" was based on an article from *Foreign Affairs* by two economics professors from Harvard and UCLA. The authors refute a statement made by some who disparage the progress of the former Soviet countries by saying, "the worst thing about Communism is what came after." They compare how these countries are doing with the rest of the world 25 years after the Berlin wall came down.

Thirty countries make up the post Communist world. Those in central Europe are more European and those in central Asia, more Asian. During the authoritarian Communist era, there was emphasis on heavy industry and virtually no such thing as customer service. At the same time, education and excelling in Olympics were priorities.

Now these countries are more market friendly and their economic growth has improved, but they still have a long way to go. Heavy industry continues to do well, and customer service is good. The authors think they are doing much better than the critics say. Some have criticized them for trying to move too fast, but the two authors claim that the countries that brought about changes the fastest are better off than those who took a more deliberate approach. Statistics show that the median post-Communist country expanded faster than any other country in the world with the exception of Norway.

Still there is room for skepticism. Some critics claim that factories over-reported production in order to get bonuses. Also if another country is already doing well economically, it's unlikely that it will grow faster than a country that is suddenly released from severer restraints.

Despite some of the questionable statistics offered, the people are definitely healthier —eating more fruits and vegetables, and there has been a decrease in coronary disease. Life expectancy is 73 years, and infant mortality is down. There has also been a dramatic decrease in militarization, and university enrollment has grown.

Flora Patterson has thoroughly researched the pros and cons of the **Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement**, which President Obama promotes. In general it is a free trade agreement between the US and 11 other countries, but it is also about many other agendas centered on trade. It seeks to:

- Open up trade by getting rid of tariffs and other trade barriers.
- Address issues of labor rights, environmental practices as well as financial regulation and government procurement.
- Protect patent and copyright holders like pharmaceutical companies and Hollywood studios.

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TPP is also about China. It could be a way to get China to change its economic policies after which it could be allowed to join. The US Senate has passed legislation by a good margin to give the President "Trade Promotion Authority (Fast Tracking)" to help him negotiate without the fear that Congress will amend it after the countries have spent so long figuring out the details of this massive agreement. If this legislation passes the House as well, the President would consult with Congress after a deal is reached, and they could only vote up or down—no amendments. This would aid greatly in getting foreign governments to accept deals. Since its inception, the League of Women Voters has been involved in every free trade agreement.

Special Note - Addendum to last month's IR report: Marge Cox stated she was reading a book on Islam but did not give the name of the book. Here it is: "The History of Islam" by Robert Payne. Marge's comment: "It is interesting but rather tedious in parts."

We invite you to join us as we continue to meet once a month in June, July, and August. We will meet twice a month starting in September. See the back of the newsletter for dates and places.

Welcome New LWV CVA Members!

Susan Hamelin

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Finance Report

by Frances Schutz, LWV CVA 2015 Finance Chair

Totals As of June 10

Operating Fund	\$3816.25
Education Fund	<u>\$2863.00</u>
Total Donations	\$6679.25

Thanks to the members and friends who gave generously after our last report: **Members and friends who gave to the Education Fund: Lillian Epstein, Lois Sandy, and Leigh Middleditch.**

Applause to those members who gave to the Operating Fund: Sue Friedman, Jeanne Huber, Betty Phelan, Susan Roberts, Lois Rochester, Frances Schutz, Betty Scott, Susan Seidler, Sonjia Smith, Natalie Testa, and Sally Thomas.

Many of these members added to their dues payments an additional contribution to the OF, for which we give an additional round of applause. And several members became part of what I have come to call the 'Double Scoop Club'. Standing ovations to those who scooped out of their checkbooks a second donation to our operating fund! Hats off to all who have made it possible for us to meet our fundraising goal for this fiscal year. There's still time to slip your check into the mail before our FY closes on June 30 – join the list of honor.



League of Women Voters
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LWV CVA
President
 Kerin Yates

Newsletter
Editor
 Michele Kellermann

Rotary Club Needs Volunteers for Pre-School Book Program

The Rotary Club of Charlottesville has elected to sponsor **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library** in the Charlottesville area. This is a program that mails each registered child a free age-appropriate book each month from birth to six years old. The program began in Tennessee, Dolly Parton's home state, and is now offered throughout the state. It has made a tremendous difference in the children's reading competence. Sponsoring organizations must pay a specified amount and get volunteers to register the children. Ms. Parton's team takes care of book selection and mailing. Soon there will be a need for volunteers to help register children in our area. The League hopes to recruit volunteers for this. Look for more details in future newsletters.

Meetings and Events for June/July 2015: *Mark Your Calendars Now!*

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Wed., June 17, 4:30 to 6 pm	LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting	Virginia Foundation for the Humanities conference room at the Boar's Head Inn complex	For further information, contact Linda Goodling, 296-9865
Fri., June 19, 5 - 9 pm	"Fridays After Five" - Four Volunteers to help serve beverages	Charlottesville Downtown Mall - nTelos Pavilion	For further information, contact Kerin Yates, 964-1840
Wed., June 24, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Lois Sandy, 1666 Franklin Dr., 296-8737	For further information, contact Natalie Testa, 589-4067
Wed., July 1	LWV CVA Board "Retreat" Meeting	tba	For further information, contact Kerin Yates, 964-1840
Wed., July 22, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Natalie Testa, 70 Wildwood Dr., 589-4067	For further information, contact Natalie Testa, 589-4067