

LWV-VA Affordable Housing Study Report

This LWV-VA Affordable Housing Study was initiated by the LWV-Richmond Metropolitan Area in response to revelations in Matthew Desmond’s Pulitzer prize-winning book, “Evicted,” that the City of Richmond had the second highest eviction rate in the nation and nine other Virginia large and small cities were among the top 10 highest. A new, State-wide study of affordable housing was approved at the LWV-VA Convention in June 2019. Safe, affordable housing is a health issue, an economic issue, and an environmental issue, as well as a moral and equity issue.

Due to the length of the study, we are publishing the Executive Summary and Consensus Questions in the Voter. The full study (41 pages) may be found on the League's website at lww-fairfax.org/newsletters.

Calendar

- 1-31 US Voter Education Month
- 1-31 Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- 2 Reston Community Center Election, 5 p.m.
- 2 LWVNCA Virtual Board Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 3 LWVFA Virtual Briefing and At-Large Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 5 Fairfax Voter Deadline for November 2020
- 5 10th District Candidate Forum, Virtual via Zoom Webinar
- 6 LWV-VA Board Meeting, 9 a.m.
- 7 Woodlake Towers Comm. Election, 6:30 p.m.
- 8-14 LWVFA Virtual Unit Meetings
- 13 Voter Registration Deadline for the November 3rd Election
- 21 Skyline Plaza Community Election, 10 a.m.
- 21 LWVFA Board Meeting, Virtual, 10 a.m.
- 23 Last Day to Apply for Absentee Ballot by Mail, Fax, Email, or online for the November 3rd General Election
- 31 Final Day for In-Person Absentee Voting

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Presidents' Message



Dear Fellow Leaguers,

We hope you are all staying safe and healthy while enjoying our very special Virginia autumn!

These past six months - yes it has been six months since our Governor first put us in lockdown - have been the most surreal time for us all! Crazy in every way beyond the creative pivots and adaptations we have made to continue our work in this environment.

This has been a tremendous time of change in so many ways. Yet, even in these times of grave safety and health concerns, people have united to raise their voices. We have seen protests, both peaceful and not so peaceful, comprised of thousands of people marching while wearing masks. People have rallied while staying in their cars, forming a continuous line of free speech, as witnessed in several Fairfax County locations. Entire families are out there - three generations speaking as one.

This upcoming election has created an urgency around the necessity to get out the vote. People are energized and concerned. Our volunteer postcard-writing program was so popular that we expanded the effort, writing and sending out more. These campaigns have focused on two issues to date - an end to gerrymandering and the promotion of fact-based information found at our Vote 411 site.

In light of COVID, our candidate forums will go virtual on Zoom. We hope to see even greater attendance due to the ease of access and the fact that no one has to drive anywhere and find parking!

Our annual kickoff event went off without a hitch. And, at the risk of sounding repetitive, we are amazed as to how quickly our members have adapted to doing virtually everything, virtually!

Our Voter Services team is busier than ever preparing materials that inform and educate people about all the new voter laws. Our League has worked tremendously diligently and quickly to create multiple narrated Power Point presentations which focus on a number of important topics, such as voting, why we vote, how to register, how

to vote (that includes applying for an absentee ballot), to name a few. They have also developed and narrated Power Points on the LWVFA website for the education of our local high school students. These presentations have been crafted with scripts and teacher notes so that teachers can guide students through the registration process virtually

Our team has also engineered socially-distanced methods for conducting several condo and community elections. Please go to our website to access the sign-up genius if you would like to volunteer.

Here at the League, one of our foundational missions is to learn about various issues so we can develop positions which are always based on facts and peer discussions. As Leaguers, we are therefore a little better informed than most people. As such, we must seek not only to learn but to share this knowledge. We therefore encourage you to find ways to discuss these issues knowledgeably with friends,

**Fairfax County 24-hr.
Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline:
703-360-7273; 711 TTY**

LWVFA Fairfax VOTER 2020 - 2021

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Please e-mail address corrections to the office
or call 703-658-9150.

family and colleagues. At the LWVFA, our goal is to educate and inform. Actually conversing with other people, whether in person, over the phone, via social media or any other way you may interact is still the most effective way to pass along knowledge.

So, in these days leading up to the election and beyond, we would like to encourage you to go ahead and disseminate everything you have learned about elections and new voting laws, issues that impact our communities and what matters most to you. Let's all make a difference together!

Anu and Nancy



Spotlight on Voter Services

By Cindy Kalkwarf, Voter Services Chair

The Voter Services volunteer team focuses on providing educational and informational public services, registering people to vote, getting out the vote, and initiating outreach programs to groups of potential voters. Interested in joining our team? Contact cindy.kalkwarf@lww-fairfax.org.

Quick Reference Guide for Fairfax Voters

The new guide, updated September 1st, is displayed on page 10 of this *Voter*. We also have a Spanish version of the flyer. We have had tremendous feedback on the flyer's impact and encourage you to help distribute them electronically and/or printed copy.

The flyers, along with other valuable voter information, are available in PDF form on our website, <https://www.lww-fairfax.org/voter-information>. Please distribute PDF versions to your family, friends, social clubs, church groups, etc. We also have a printed version, English on one side and Spanish on the other. Feel free to stop by the League office and pick up copies to distribute in your neighborhood.

Spotlight on Edith Appel

Interviewed by Cindy Kalkwarf and Julie Jones (12/9/19)

Edith joined the League in 1950 in New York and joined LWVFA in 1972. Many League ladies were mothers with young children at that time. They would gather the kids in one home with a babysitter, while they held their meetings in another home.

She found the League to be a great steppingstone. In 1980 she became an Administrative Assistant for the Mt. Vernon District Supervisors as a direct result of her work with the League.

Edith has many League memories, but one stands out. In the 70's, the only way to register to vote in Fairfax was to make an appointment in the Registrar's home. This could be very intimidating for minority citizens. The League helped minorities with their appointments by escorting them to the Registrar's home and helping them to register.

Among her many League activities, she served two terms as Voter Services Chair. She went to a national convention in New York in the mid-1970s where she found ideas on how to expand and improve the *Facts for Voters*. She did a mockup on paper using a typewriter at a local newspaper office, *The Star*, then searched to find funding for its printing. Her idea of using a cascading-style brochure was used for many years until it was too costly to produce. She was part of a team of two who did the Voters Guides, the *Facts for Voters* and all the candidate forums.

She continues her League involvement by being the Co-chair of the Greenspring unit. In her many years as a member she feels that the League issues really haven't changed much. ERA, Civil Rights, and Affordable Housing are still major concerns.

Did You Know?

In Canada, there is no deadline to register to vote. Voters are allowed to register when they arrive at the polls on Election Day.

In France, citizens are automatically registered to vote when they turn 18 years old. In Sweden, eligible voters are automatically registered when they turn in their tax registration rolls.

Oregon is the first and only state to use automatic voter registration. (Source: <https://www.factretriever.com/>)

Dismantling Systemic Racism Reading List

by Jessica Storrs

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area is pleased to share the Fairfax County Public Library's list of recommended books on Dismantling Systemic Racism. We support the library's work towards replacing violence and fear with inclusiveness and enlightenment, and we support an end to racism towards all people of color. For more resources on racial and social equity, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison
Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston
Race Matters by Cornel West
My Grandfather's Son: a Memoir by Clarence Thomas
Citizen: an American Lyric by Claudia Rankine
Homegoing: a Novel by Yaa Gyasi
Stamped From the Beginning: the Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi
White Rage: the Unspoken Truth of our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson
They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement by Wesley Lowery
Locking Up Our Own: Crime and Punishment in Black America by James Forman
The Color of Law: a Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America by Richard Rothstein
Chokehold: Policing Black Men by Paul Butler
So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo
A More Beautiful and Terrible History: the Uses and Misuses of Civil Rights History by Jeanne Theoharis
When They Call You a Terrorist: a Black Lives Matter Memoir by Patrisse Khan-Cullors
This Will be My Undoing: Living at the Intersection of Black, Female, and Feminist in (White) America by Morgan Jerkins
What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Blacker: a Memoir in

Essays by Damon Young
How We Fight White Supremacy: a Field Guide to Black Resistance edited by Akiba Solomon & Kenrya Rankin
How to be Less Stupid about Race: on Racism, White Supremacy, and the Racial Divide by Crystal Marie Fleming
White Fragility: Why it's so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin J. DiAngelo
How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi
Difficult Women by Roxane Gay
I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown
Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong by James W. Loewen
The Yellow House by Sarah M. Broom
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds
The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
Ain't I a Woman by Bell Hooks
Build Yourself a Boat by Camonghne Felix
Me and White Supremacy by Layla F. Saad
Troublemaker for Justice by Michael G. Long
Solitary: Unbroken by Four Decades in Solitary Confinement by Albert Woodfox
This book is Anti-Racist by Tiffany Jewell
Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge
A Bound Woman is a Dangerous Thing by DaMaris B. Hill
Thick and Other Essays by Tressie McMillan Cottom



Did You Know?

Racism costs the US almost \$2 trillion each year. This comes in the form of bias against workers, wage discrimination, hiring discrimination, discrimination based on price, services discrimination, discrete usage discrimination and capital investment discrimination.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

(Source: <https://socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/facts-and-figures/racism/>)

Study of Affordable Housing in Virginia

The focus of this State-wide study of affordable housing is very low- and extremely low-income households who are primarily renters. In addition to characterizing the state of affordable housing in Virginia, the study:

- Outlines resource options available at the State and local levels to increase the supply of affordable housing and preserve the existing affordable housing stock;
- Identifies the most important barriers that stand in the way of development of this type of housing; and
- Brings to light laws and regulations that make it difficult for very low- and extremely low-income households to find and maintain their housing.

The study is guided by the applicable LWVUS principles:

From the League of Women Voters U.S. “Principles,” *Impact on Issues 2018-2020: A Guide to Public Policy Positions*, (page 6): The League of Women Voters believes responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

Note: Due to the length of the study, we are publishing only the Executive Summary and Consensus Questions in the Voter. The full study (41 pages) can be found on the League’s website at lwv-fairfax.org/newsletters.

Executive Summary

Background

In April 2018, a *New York Times* article highlighted the eviction crisis in the nation and named the City of Richmond as having the second highest eviction rate among large cities, a rate more than five times the national average: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/04/07/upshot/millions-of-eviction-records-a-sweeping-new-look-at-housing-in-america.html>. The article was based on data released by the Eviction Lab at Princeton University, directed by Matthew Desmond, PhD, the Pulitzer prizewinning author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* (2016).

Richmond was not unique. Four other Virginia cities were among the 10 large US cities with the highest eviction rates. In addition, three Virginia cities were among the top 10 mid-size US cities for high eviction rates. These high eviction rates and the stories of evicted families and individuals portrayed in Desmond’s book were catalysts, leading the LWV-RMA to ask the LWVVA to undertake a Statewide study of affordable housing. A Statewide Affordable Housing Study Committee was organized for this purpose; this document is the result of their work.

The focus of this study is renter households at 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or below -- the population with the most serious need for affordable housing. We include people experiencing homelessness, who will eventually enter rental housing. Housing is considered “affordable” if rent

and utilities consume no more than 30% of the household’s total monthly income.

Key findings on affordable housing need in Virginia

- Low-income Virginians are paying too much for their housing. Among extremely-low income renter households (total income is 30% or less of Area Median Income), 87% are housing “cost-burdened” (paying more than 30% of their income for housing), and 70% are “severely cost-burdened” (paying more than 50% of their income for housing). Among very-low-income renter households (total income is 31% to 50% of AMI), 81% are housing “cost-burdened,” and 33% are “severely cost-burdened.”

The highest housing cost burdens (76%) occur among extremely-low-income households in urbanized Northern Virginia. Rural areas still have the lowest cost-burdens, but rural housing cost-burden has increased by over 85% over the past 15 years.

- Affordable rental units are not available. For every 100 extremely low-income renter households in Virginia, only 36 rental units are currently affordable and available, equating to a deficit of over 157,807 rental units across the State. For every 100 very low income renter households, only 57 rental units are affordable and available, equating to a deficit of over 177,818 rental units Statewide. The largest gap in affordable and available rental units for extremely low income renters is in Northern Virginia – only 28 units are

available for every 100 households. Rural areas have the lowest gaps for extremely low-income renters.

- Minimum wage earners cannot afford even modest rental units. In order to afford a modest one-bedroom apartment in Virginia, a person earning the State's minimum wage of \$7.25/hour needs to work 109 hours per week. To afford that modest rent and work only 40 hours a week, a one-person household must earn \$19.70 an hour or \$40,981 a year. In reality, very low-income, one-person households in Virginia now average \$31,000 annually.
- Homelessness is decreasing, but appropriate housing is still in short supply. While there has been a 36% decrease in the number of Virginia residents experiencing homelessness during the past 10 years, over 5,800 persons were still experiencing homelessness in 2019 during the one-day count. Persons in homeless shelters accounted for 85% of this total, while 15% were unsheltered. Current best practices in homelessness programs are to focus on permanent housing, limit stays in emergency shelters, rapidly re-house persons who are homeless, and provide permanent supportive housing for those who are chronically homeless. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) estimates a need for 5,000 additional permanent supportive housing units in Virginia for people with serious mental illness.
- The highest eviction rates are clustered in Virginia's poorer cities. The average eviction rate in the nation is 2.34%; in Virginia, it is 5.12%. Within Virginia, the highest eviction areas are clustered in the poorer cities, where poverty rates are between 15 and 29%. For example, in the City of Richmond, the eviction rate is 11.4% and the poverty rate is 25%. In 2016, an average of 17.34 evictions occurred every day in Richmond; 30% of Richmond renters received an eviction notice, nearly all (95%) for non-payment of rent. On the other hand, Northern Virginia poverty rates and eviction rates are much lower than the State average, generally in the single digits.
- Why is there a severe shortage of rental housing for the lowest income Virginia households? Incomes have not kept pace with housing costs, especially in high-cost areas. Federal rental subsidies are insufficient to help even the poorest renters. In addition, a high demand for rental housing was caused by the high foreclosure rate during the 2008 financial crash. Even many young professionals cannot now afford homeownership, but they are able to pay higher rents

for housing that was once affordable for low-income households. In rural areas, demand for rental housing increases, but we see little appetite to provide it. Finally, without financial incentives, builders do not find it economically feasible to develop affordable housing for very low- and extremely low-income renters.



State role and resources for affordable housing

While the federal government provides most of the resources for affordable housing, mainly through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), state governments also have supplemental roles in setting policy and providing resources. Virginia has been providing State resources for housing and homelessness since 1987, and that continues today. As a Dillon Rule State, Virginia also has a role in enabling localities to enact legislation that could increase the supply of affordable housing. Virginia can also help or hinder access to affordable housing through laws and policies. The following list summarizes current and potential State resources as well as issues impacting the supply and access to affordable housing in Virginia:

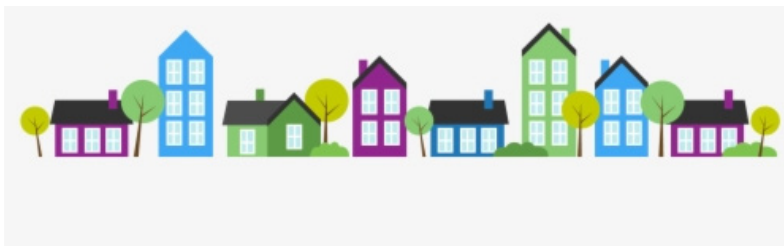
- Virginia Housing Trust Fund: Virginia is one of 47 states (plus the District of Columbia) that have housing trust funds (HTF) which provide gap financing in the form of low-interest or zero-interest loans, to enable the creation and preservation of low-income housing. Since its enactment in 2013, the VHTF, administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), has funded over 3,000 housing units in 45 projects across Virginia with the \$27 million in state appropriations. More than half of the units are for households at 50% of AMI and below.
- Homelessness grants and permanent supportive housing (PSH) funding: The Virginia DHCD awards approximately \$14.2 million in State funds annually to

over 80 organizations around the State for emergency shelters, rapid re-housing programs, homeless prevention programs, developing PSH units, and supportive services in PSH. Since 2016, PSH for persons with serious mental illness (including those who are homeless) is also provided by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, in the form of ongoing rental subsidies. The current appropriation is \$17.8 million which will assist over 1,200 individuals. About 90 to 95% of individuals in PSH remain stably housed.

- Eviction Diversion/Prevention Program: As one response to the eviction crisis in Virginia, a pilot eviction diversion program was approved by the 2019 General Assembly (GA), to be implemented in July 2020 in four cities. The program will divert some tenants from being evicted -- if they come to court with 25% of the rent owed and make payment arrangements for the remainder. In the 2020 GA, \$3.3 million was appropriated to help tenants in diversion programs to pay part of their rent. These funds can also be used for prevention, which generally occurs prior to court papers being filed, to help tenants pay back rent. Both diversion and prevention programs provide tenants with support services and housing counseling, in addition to the rental assistance. (Due to COVID-19, these funds have not been allotted.)
- Potential State housing resources: Two other potential actions could help create and preserve affordable housing for very low-income people or could help them pay their rent. The first is the creation of a State Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) as a companion to the Federal LIHTC program, which has been the primary Federal funding source for the development and preservation of affordable rental housing. Investors in developments receive tax credits that provide developers equity in a project. A companion state LIHTC would add additional equity to the project and could potentially target households at very low incomes. A bill was passed in the 2020

GA requesting that the Department of Housing and Community Development draft legislation to add a State LIHTC program. The second potential program is a State-funded Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) to supplement the underfunded and oversubscribed Federal rental subsidies paid to a landlord for households at very low incomes. The household pays 30% of its income for rent, and the remainder is paid by the vouchers.

- Use of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV): Prior to the passage of the Source of Income bill (HB6) by the 2020 GA, it was legal for landlords to deny an apartment to a HCV holder, even if they met all the rental eligibility criteria. The organization Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) reported that only 12% of apartment complexes they interviewed would accept HCVs, thereby denying housing choice to voucher holders. The passage of HB6 rectifies this inequity.
- Policies that incentivize affordable housing development: Six localities in Virginia, all but one in Northern Virginia, have mandatory inclusionary zoning (IZ) ordinances that provide incentives to developers to add affordable housing units in their projects. Incentives include access to local funds, reduction in density requirements, and waivers of standard development requirements, such as parking spaces. The 2020 GA approved an amendment to the IZ statute, giving other localities the option of passing similar mandatory IZ ordinances.
- Eviction laws and policies: Since Virginia was thrust into the spotlight in the spring of 2018, housing and legal advocates have pushed for changes to laws to help reduce evictions and lessen the impact of the eviction on affected households. Successful State-wide efforts include requiring written leases, putting a cap on late fees, and requiring eviction orders to be expunged from records if the case is later dismissed and the tenant requests the expungement.



Consensus Questions

Please note that examples are included with the following questions. They are just examples and not intended to limit your answers; you may add any other responses that you wish.

1. The State and localities should utilize the following existing funding mechanism to preserve and create affordable housing:

- o Virginia Housing Trust Fund
- o Homelessness grants
- o Permanent Supportive Housing through DBHDS
- o Eviction diversion/prevention programs

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

2. The State and localities should consider the creation of the following funding mechanism to preserve and create affordable housing:

- o State Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program
- o State Housing Choice Vouchers

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

3. The State should require that landlords accept Housing Choice Vouchers households provided they meet all the same rental criteria used with other tenants.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

4. Taking into consideration the Dillon Rule, the State should grant all localities in Virginia the right to adopt mandatory inclusion zoning policies.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

“It is hard to argue that housing is not a fundamental human need. Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart.”

— Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

5. Taking into consideration the Dillon Rule, the State should grant localities the right to enact eviction mitigation measures such as bans on evictions and utilities shut-offs during extreme weather and other declared state of emergencies.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

6. State laws should provide more tenant protections including extended pay-or-quit periods or mandatory grace periods.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

7. State laws should seek to mitigate the impact of evictions to include limiting late fees and supporting the expungement of eviction records.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ No Consensus _____

Comments:

Did You Know?

Some countries, such as India, Greece, Ukraine, and Colombia, have a "None of the Above" option on their election ballots. In the United States, only Nevada offers a "None of These Candidates" option.

Over 22 countries around the world require their citizens to vote. Citizens who do not vote are typically subject to penalties, such as fines or community service. Voter turnout in these countries is typically high.

Many countries, such as Greece, Australia, and Brazil, hold their elections on the weekend to encourage higher voter turnout. Traditionally, elections in the United States have been held on Tuesdays because, in the past, that allowed farmers to travel to polling places. Tuesdays did not interfere with the Biblical Sabbath or with market day, which, in many towns, was on Wednesday.

(Source: <https://www.factretriever.com/election-facts>)

LWVFA Donors and Supporters

The LWVFA Board extends an overwhelming thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their amazing support!
May 8, 2020 – August 31, 2020

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Giving Tuesday
 Sidney Johnson
 Dorothy Joslin
 Maggi Luca
 * * * * *

In memory of Elaine Bronez
 Sandra Peterson
 * * * * *

In memory of Baba Freeman
 Marcia McDevitt
 * * * * *

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 Centreville-Chantilly Unit
 Fairfax Station Unit
 Greenspring Unit
 McLean Unit
 Mount Vernon Day Unit
 Mount Vernon Evening Unit
 Oakton-Vienna Unit
 Reston Day Unit
 Reston Evening Unit
 Springfield Unit

Thank You!!

Meetings on COVID-19 and Domestic Violence in Fairfax County

By Theresa Brion

LWVFA Representative to CEDV

Vice-Chair, LWVFA Domestic Violence Committee

An article in the June issue of the *Voter* discussed the affects of COVID-19 on domestic violence. This article focuses on the Fairfax County Committee to End Domestic Violence (CEDV) meetings held on May 21 and July 23, 2020. In May, the CEDV met virtually to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on domestic violence in the County (our League is a member of the CEDV). Due to applicable legal requirements limiting electronic meetings to those of an “emergency” nature, the quarterly CEDV meeting in May confined its discussion to COVID-19-related concerns. However, subsequent legal changes permitted the CEDV to conduct a normal July meeting virtually.

The focus of the May meeting was a panel discussion on “The Impacts of COVID on Victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence” facilitated by Raven Dickerson (Chief Program Officer for Domestic Violence Services for Shelter House). Marla Zomestsky of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board stated that reported domestic violence cases have increased both in number and intensity during the pandemic, rising to 24 cases in one day versus the pre-COVID-19 frequency of approximately 8 or 9 a day. She also noted increased paranoia, suicidal ideation, and increased anxiety by those victims, who now must seek assistance via virtual versus in-person means. She further noted the adverse impacts of COVID’s quarantine requirements on access to shelters and needed assessments.

During the July meeting, Katrina Wayne, Director, Programs and Services Region 1 Artemis House, stated that the demand exceeded the shelter’s capability, requiring it to use hotels to handle the excess needs. Although Artemis House did not have a single COVID-19 case, it still had to look to hotels to reduce their overall risk. She said the staff is seeing more significant domestic violence cases and fewer sexual abuse cases. There is still a continuing need for gift cards and beds-in-a-box donations to assist clients exiting to permanent housing. She also shared the good news that Artemis House had 15 successful exits to permanent housing in April 2020.

Judge Jonathan Frieden of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court shared that petitioners are experiencing struggles in preparing and submitting petitions for protective orders, absent in-person hearings, and the resulting

opportunity for dialogue and clarification. He also noted having seen fewer or the same level of applications as in the past.

Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer, noted that continued efforts were made to assure equity in access to testing and decision-making during this period. She also reminded members of the public health emergency’s disproportionately negative impact on certain socio-economic groups, who cannot work remotely from home. Misinformation and fears continue to be difficulties for all.

Angela Yeboah, Domestic Violence Action Center (DVAC) Project Coordinator, noted a slight uptick in calls to the Hotline as well as the severity and length of calls, requiring increased triage in handling them. She noted increased anxiety and depression by clients as well as increased counseling needs. These observations align with Marla’s. Financial, housing, and similar concerns have further contributed to clients’ fears and anxiety. Gretchen Soto, Offender Services, noted how these concerns have impacted the offender clients as well, as they face increased unemployment, the difficulties of social distancing, etc. She also noted, however, increased resilience and the use of coping mechanisms by those in the programs. Additional case support is still needed.

Jim Ferguson, Executive Director, Legal Services of Northern Virginia, stated that COVID-19 has had a hard affect on our region. He observed that the highest number of domestic violence cases have been in the 13 of the 14 Zip Codes with the highest number of COVID-19 cases within Northern Virginia and particularly in those Zip Codes where people with the lowest 25% of income live.

The new CEDV logo was unanimously approved. It includes the letters CEDV and the name in two shades of purple to highlight “end” and the purpose of the CEDV, along with a two-toned purple ribbon.

The decision to postpone the election of a new chair until a special meeting to be scheduled in September garnered greater discussion. This decision was made to have time to figure out how to better reflect the One Fairfax commitment to intentionally consider equity when making policies and delivering programs and services, and thus with the CEDV leadership structure. Chair John Cook appointed a committee to consider other similar bodies’ efforts in that regard and present its recommendations for a path forward at the special September meeting, now scheduled for September 17, 2020.

Environmental Update: Back to School

By Elizabeth Lonoff

Transportation is Virginia's largest source of carbon dioxide pollution and a key source of other harmful pollutants. They are impacting public safety and the economy with coastal flooding and public health by increasing asthma rates in school-aged children. Hence Virginia joined the region's Transportation and Climate Initiative two years ago to reduce such emissions, following the model of the consortium to reduce power plant emissions.

In that spirit, in July Governor Northam announced a plan to invest \$14 million from Virginia's share of the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust to replace all-diesel cargo handling equipment at the Port of Virginia with zero-emission all-electric equipment; and \$20 million to fund the Clean Air Communities Program to electrify State and local government fleets, particularly for historically underserved populations. With an additional \$10 million contributed by the Port of Virginia, the project will permanently eliminate more than 3,000 tons of diesel pollution and more than 71,000 tons of greenhouse gases. Nearby communities will be spared diesel pollution from most of the cargo being transported through them on diesel-powered trucks.

Virginia previously dedicated \$14 million from the VW emissions settlement to develop Virginia's electric vehicle charging network, \$14 million to deploy electric transit buses, and \$20 million to purchase electric school buses and charging infrastructure. According to the school bus press release:

"Nearly all of Virginia's school bus fleet runs on diesel, with approximately 3,500 buses older than 10 years. More than 500 buses still in operation across the Commonwealth use engines built prior to the first Environmental Protection Agency diesel standards. Replacing 75 buses with all-electric school buses results in a lifetime savings of 670,000 pounds nitrogen oxide, approximately 41,000 pounds of particulate matter, and 36 million pounds of greenhouse gas tailpipe emissions. This is equivalent to removing 3,500 cars from the road.

"Each electric school bus can save districts nearly \$2,000 a year in fuel and \$4,400 a year in reduced maintenance costs, saving tens of thousands of dollars over the lifetime of a bus."

A month before the Governor's 2019 school bus announcement, Dominion Energy undertook an initiative to cover the extra cost of replacing all diesel-fueled buses across

Virginia with electric ones by 2030. In the first phase, Dominion is supporting 50 buses in 16 localities. Fairfax County received funding assistance for eight of its 1,624 diesel buses. The final four could arrive before in-person classes resume.

Fairfax County's School Board adopted an environmental stewardship policy in 2008. In the following decade, FCPS reduced its carbon emissions from natural gas, fuel oil, and electricity consumption by 35% while adding 2.2 million square feet of occupied space. Leading the way in Virginia, Fairfax County is installing solar panels at 113 government, park, and school buildings.

You can help shrink the County's transportation carbon footprint by idling less for your curbside pickup and by running errands together, called trip chaining. Idling reduction is an easy way to use less fuel and minimize engine wear, lowering costs AND pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. In the U.S., idling cars emit 30 million tons of CO2 annually. Eliminating unnecessary car idling would be the same as taking 5 million vehicles off the roads. So stop and restart your engine if you'll be sitting for more than 10-60 seconds, depending on the vehicle. For more anti-idling information, see https://afdc.energy.gov/files/publication/idling_personal_vehicles.pdf. For how to spread the word to fleets, see <https://cleancities.energy.gov/technical-assistance/idlebox/>.

Follow Fairfax County's June 9th lead in creating a natural landscaping plan to restore ecological function

Plant NOVA Natives is hosting free training for HOAs and condo associations to plan and manage common open space. The examples for ecologically-sustainable community master planning and land management will be from Loudoun County but applicable anywhere. The Zoom session at 1 - 4 pm on Saturday, October 24th, will be particularly geared toward community association decision makers and landscape companies. Please register online.

If you do live in Loudoun County, the Audubon Naturalist Society is starting a free Greening Your Neighborhood program in November to help you lead ecological change in your community. You'll attend a half-day workshop, tour green infrastructure projects in Loudoun, and report on the outcome of your HOA or condo association conservation project early next summer.



August 28, 2020

To the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees,

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area supports and promotes the Fairfax County Public Library's initiatives focused on diversity and inclusion, social and racial justice, and spotlighting authors from marginalized populations. The library's resource collection "*FCPL Stand on Social and Racial Equity*" accelerates and enables a timely discussion on race and social justice in our own community.

To expand awareness of our nation's history of systemic racism and discrimination, the League will publish the FCPL's "Battling Systemic Racism" resource list in its October 2020 newsletter, the *Fairfax Voter*. We encourage other community groups to do the same, and in so doing, applaud the library's commitment to promoting resources from diverse perspectives and enabling timely discussions on race and social justice.

A library is a reflection of the community it serves. We have an obligation to ensure that all members of the community find themselves there. It is particularly critical for the children's collection to reflect a comprehensive worldview. Children encounter diversity regularly in their interactions with others at home, in school, and in the community. It is important that they learn about other cultures in a way that teaches them to be respectful of differences and reject stereotypes. It is also crucial that they see themselves mirrored in the library's collection.

The League views our community's difficult discourse on racial and social inequities as enlightening, not offensive. These conversations require us to listen to our neighbors and embrace respect for all people everywhere. The League will work in tandem with the [Fairfax County Public Library in its efforts](#) to support the principles of [One Fairfax](#) and ensure that our county's residents are informed of racial and social injustices in our midst and take the necessary steps forward on the never-ending arc toward equity.

Respectfully submitted,

Anu Sahai

Anu Sahai, Co-President
League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area

LWVFA MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2020

As you can see from the impressively long list of new members, LWVFA has grown a lot since the June VOTER was published. We now have 506 members in our league. Please welcome all of the new folks and encourage them to attend meetings and volunteer their services in our many education and advocacy activities. For those current members who have not renewed for 2020-2021, please visit the web site at <https://lww-fairfax.org/Join> to complete your renewal form and make a payment for membership fees. THANK YOU!!

Bruce Anderson	Barbara Kates
Ashley Applebaum	Madhur (reinstated) and Sanjay Khanna
Elizabeth Bainbridge	Anna Klemmer (student)
Katherine Bauer	Mandi Koba (student)
Jessica Bibb	Gregory Koch
Heather Blersch	Amanda Kropp
Annette Bobby	Erica Larsen
John Boyer	Olacoy Lawyer
Angel Brownawell	Sara Leonard
John Carle	Christine Lively
Sherelle Carper	Maryanne and Mikayla (student) MacVicar
Lynn Chadwick	Jocelyn McCullough (student)
Linda Charest	Dianne Mero
Kaye Cook	Betsy Millett
Laurie Corkey	Bill Millhouser
Vanessa Crow	Victoria (Vickie) Mitchell
Alan and Kimberly Dare	Rachel Morowitz
J. Michael Deal	Margaret Murphy
Danielle Dean and Wendy Walters-Dean	Leni Nazare
Kyla Duggal (student)	Sandra Palmer
Frances Duvall	Ken Plum
Sarah Eissler	Margaret Pride
Yabesra Ewnetu (student)	Anita Ranade
Karen Flann	Robin Rhodarmer (Applebaum Household)
Kevin and Stephanie Frye	Julia and Katherine Rogers
Eugenia Gardner	Rita Roth
Janine Greenwood	Ellen Russell
Cynthia and Rebecca Haataja	Ashley Saunders
Marjorie Hackett	Julia Sayles
Maura Hackett	Jennifer Schneider
Alexis Haftvani	Richard Stewart
Elizabeth Hale	Susan Merritt Stimart and Stimart Household
Veronica Hanpeter	Rebecca Stone
Courtney Hess	Marbea Tamaro
Patti Higginbotham	William Von Holle (Von Holle Household)
Todd Hillman and Deborah Mayer-Hillman	Carla and Gregory Walsh
Michael Hoefler (Hoefler Household)	Suzanne White
Sarah Holler	Beatrice and Ethan Wolman (student)
Maria Hunt	Elizabeth Woodruff
Dayna Hutchings	Susan Yenyo
Joni Jordan	Carolina Young

WELCOME!!



Tuesday Nov 3, 2020 General Election
 Now a State Holiday **NEW!**
President ~ Senator ~ Congress ~ Local
Two State Constitutional Amendments: Redistricting
and Property Tax; Plus Local Bond Issues

Am I Eligible to Vote?

- ✓ A citizen of the United States
- ✓ At least 18 years of age by Nov 3
- ✓ A resident of Virginia
- ✓ Had voting rights restored if convicted of felony or judged mentally incapacitated

How do I Register or Update My Registration? *Deadline: Oct 13*

- **Online:** elections.virginia.gov/registration (need DMV driver's license or ID card)
- **By Mail:** Download forms from Dept. of Elections website or pick up from local Registrar, or Public Libraries
- **Automatic** registration when accessing services at DMV **NEW!**
- **In public high schools** during the school day for students who are or will be 18 on election day **NEW!**

Voter Registration Deadline (In Person/By Mail) 5:00 p.m.; online: 11:59 p.m. **Oct 13**

How do I Vote Before Election Day?

No excuse needed to vote absentee **NEW! No Witness Signature Required **NEW!****

- **Absentee-in-Person:** Office of Elections from **Sep 18-Oct 31**. See Dept. of Elections website for satellite dates and locations
- **Absentee:** Apply By Mail, E-mail or Fax Before **Oct 23 **NEW!****
- Read instructions carefully and make sure you sign the ballot envelope
- Return ballot to your registrar **OR** put in drop boxes at Office of Elections and satellite locations **NEW!** by 7:00 p.m. on **Nov 3** **OR** return by mail postmarked on or before **Nov 3** and received by your registrar by noon on **Nov 6 **NEW!****

How do I Vote on Election Day?

- ✓ **Nov 3** from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Assigned Polling Place – curbside voting may be available
- ✓ Photo ID no longer required at the polls. **NEW!** Acceptable ID examples: driver's licenses, utility bills, bank statements, pay stubs or other government documents showing the voter's name and address, a valid student photo ID from any U.S. state or territory. See elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/in-person-voting for complete list.



elections.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT)
 and State Board of Elections
 Washington Building, First Floor
 1100 Bank Street,
 Richmond 23219-3642
 804-864-8901
info@elections.virginia.gov

Unit Discussion Meeting Locations

Topic: Affordable Housing

Members and visitors are encouraged to attend any meeting convenient for them, including the “At Large Meeting” and briefing on Saturdays when a briefing is listed. Due to the pandemic, October Unit Meetings will be virtual. The unit leaders will send the login information to every unit member.

Saturday, October 3, 2020

10 a.m. At-Large Briefing

Contact: Jessica, 301-704-7854 or
jessica.storrs@lwv-fairfax.org

Thursday, October 8

9 a.m. Reston Day (RD)

Contact: Barbara (703) 437-0795,
bseandlte@earthlink.net

9:30 a.m. Springfield (SPF)

Contact: Pat, 703-941-9210, Pat.
Fege@lwv-fairfax.org

10:00 a.m. Centreville-Chantilly (CCD)

Contact: Susan, 703-391-0666,
sadill@cox.net

1 p.m. Oakton/Vienna (OV)

Contact: Mary, 703-932-3665,
mmvalder@aol.com

7:30 p.m. Reston Evening (RE)

Contact: Wendy, 703-319-4114,
wendy.foxgrage@gmail.com

7:45 p.m. Mount Vernon Evening (MVE)

Contact: Jane, 703-960-6820,
jane@hilderwilliams.net
or Susan, 703-587-4790,
scash5002@email.vccs.edu

Monday, October 12

1:30 p.m. Greenspring (GSP)

Contact: Pat, 703-663-4093, pmc-
grady308@gmail.com

Wednesday, October 14

9:30 a.m. McLean Day (McL)

Contact: Susan, 703-893-2229,
sfcowart@aol.com
or Peggy, 703-772-4939, peggyk-
night49@gmail.com

10 a.m. Mount Vernon Day (MVD)

Contact: Diana, 703-704-5325 or
Jfdw1111@gmail.com

10 a.m. Fairfax Station (FXS)

Contact: Bev, 703-451-4438, rb-
dahlin@verizon.net
or Sue, 703-266-0272, sueo-
neill1@hotmail.com

November Meetings:

Action/Advocacy Program



The League of Women Voters® of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA)
 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403
 703-658-9150. Web address: www.lwv-fairfax.org

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**The LWVFA Fairfax VOTER®
 October, 2020**

Anu Sahai, Co-President
 Nancy Roodberg, Co-President
 Katherine Ingmanson, Editor

The League of Women Voters® is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the public to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, regional and national levels the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Any person at least 16 years old, male or female, may become a member.

The League of Women Voters® never supports or opposes candidates for office or political parties, and any use of the League of Women Voters® name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

Please Support Our Work! The LWVFA Education Fund is supported by donations from our members and the public.
<https://www.lwv-fairfax.org/donate>



LWVFA MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

Dues year is July 1 – June 30

Membership Dues: Individual \$75 _____ Household \$100 (2 persons; 1 Voter) _____ Student (No fee) _____
 (A subsidy fund is available; check here _____ and include whatever amount you can afford.)

Membership Status: New _____ Renewal _____ Reinstatement _____ Donation _____
 (Dues are not tax deductible.)

Tax deductible donations must be written as a separate check or PayPal Payment to “LWVFA Ed Fund.”
 (Please print clearly)

Name _____ Unit (if renewing) _____

Address _____

City _____ /State/ _____ Zip +4 _____

Phone (C) _____ (H) _____ E-mail _____

Please make checks payable to LWVFA. Mail to LWVFA, 4026-B Hummer Road, Annandale, VA 22003-2403
 OR Join online at <https://www.lwv-fairfax.org/join>

I am interested in becoming involved in (please indicate by circling the appropriate bullet(s)):

- Providing organization support (graphic design, website development/maintenance, fundraising/grant writing)
- Voter Services (e.g., voter registration drives, candidate forums, developing Voters’ Guides)
- Researching/writing about issues in which LWVFA has an interest (e.g., environment, firearms safety, mental health, schools, domestic violence, etc., or chairing an LWVFA study committee on voter turnout or human trafficking)
- Representing the League in governmental fora (e.g., serving as LWVFA representative on Fairfax County citizens’ committees and agencies, such as affordable housing, or Fairfax County Public Schools).

Other _____