

March 2022 Newsletter



From the Desk of the President

Janet Gorn, LWV-PWFA President *

Environmental Protection **CALL TO ACTION**
Virginia “Disposable Plastic Bag Tax Law”



Virginia governor signs advanced recycling bill into law

The League of Women Voters of Virginia adopted a Policy Position on Environmental Protection anti-pollution goals aimed to prevent ecological degradation and to reduce and control pollutants before they go down the sewer, up the chimney, or into landfills. The Virginia “Disposable Plastic Bag Tax Law” ****is in keeping with the League’s Environmental Protection Policy Position.

CALL TO ACTION – The LWV-PWFA members are urged to contact their Prince William County Board of Supervisors Representative to support passage of a County Ordinance in favor of implementing the Virginia Disposable Plastic Bag Tax Law.

Alexandria City, Arlington County, Fairfax County, City of Falls Church, City of Fredericksburg, Loudoun County, and the City of Roanoke have adopted a Disposable Plastic Bag Tax Law. The Northern Virginia Regional Commission and the Northern Virginia Waste Management Board support local government enactment of the legislation.

The Prince William County Board of Supervisors debated a plastic bag tax in April 2021. However, they took no action to level the new tax, which is still pending consideration. PWC Finance Director Michelle Attreed reported that revenue from a plastic bag tax is not great and

likely to start around \$50,000-\$55,000 a year, before increasing to \$90,000. However, she pointed out that reducing the use of plastic waste is the tax's goal not revenue collection.

The Fauquier County Board of Supervisors briefly discussed the proposed new plastic bag tax, there are no pending plans to again address the topic.

****THE LAW:

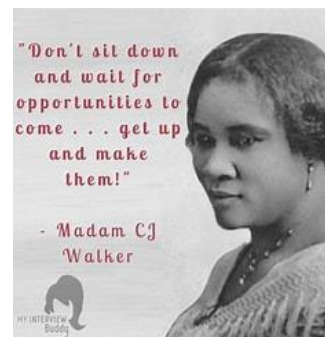
The Virginia General Assembly approved legislation on a Disposable Plastic Bag Tax, and it was signed into law on March 29, 2021. It is an "Opt in Law" which requires local government adoption before collecting the tax. The new law allows localities to impose a 5-cent tax on disposable plastic bags at grocery, convenience, and drug stores with some exceptions. The State code requires retailers to collect the tax proceeds in a similar manner to sales and meals taxes. The tax is collected at the point of sale, similarly to the sales tax, and is administered and enforced by the Virginia Tax Commissioner. Through December 31, 2022, retailers can keep 2-cents from the tax collected on each bag, with the retailer's share dropping to 1-cent starting January 1, 2023. Revenue from such taxes must be for specific activities such as environmental cleanup, and litter and pollution mitigation. The new law is intended to provide an incentive to transition to paper bags and reusable bags and to reduce plastic pollution.

It is March and time to celebrate **Women's History Month!**

Connie Gilman, Vice President,

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month celebrates the often overlooked contributions of women in history, society, and culture. It has been annually observed in the United States and other countries, including the United Kingdom and Australia, every March since 1987. The month is observed in October in Canada. March is selected as the month for observing Women's History Month to correspond with International Women's Day on March 8, and Canada observes it in October in correspondence with Persons Day on October 18.



The month-long commemoration started with Women's History Day in 1978, organized by the school district of Sonoma, California. Hundreds of students participated in the essay competitions, many presentations were given, and a parade was held in Santa Rosa. The idea caught on and, a few years later, school districts, communities, and organizations all over the

country were celebrating the day. In 1980, the National Women's History Alliance championed for the holiday to be observed as a national week, and this was backed by President Jimmy Carter, who issued the first proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National Women's History Week. The following year, Congress forwarded a resolution establishing a national observance. Six years later, the expansion of the event to the whole month of March was successfully petitioned by the National Women's History Project.

There are so many wonderful Women in the past, and currently, who help mold the women we strive to become. Stop a moment and think of the Women who have influenced the development of your life story. Allow the memories to flow and feel grateful for their influence on your success!

A Warm Welcome to our New Board Members!



Secretary, Cynthia Chambliss

Cynthia is one of our longtime members and the Board is excited to have her volunteer to be Secretary! She is also President of the Committee of 100, with whom we frequently partner in programs.

VOTE411 Chair, Donna Anstee

Donna is one of our newer members and the Board is excited to have her volunteer to be leading the VOTE411 efforts! Donna joined the LWV – PWFA on November 1st, 2020.

PWC Racial and Social Justice Commission Report Issue Study Co-Chair, Lorraine Schooner, Ruth Balton, Heidi Whitesel

Lorraine is also one of our longtime members and she and the Issue Committee members have hit the ground running and started the review process.



Building a Resilient Chapter

Trish Freed, Treasurer

It's that time of the year when members of the Budget Committee put their heads together and talk about our fiscal strategy for the upcoming Fiscal Year. The Committee met several times thus far to review the current budget and to develop a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. A first draft of the proposed budget will be presented to the Board in March, allowing time for reflection and discussion, before the final version comes before our membership at the Annual Meeting in May.

We are also proposing that we add a balanced budget amendment to our League Bylaws and a resolution that would protect our operating reserves by limiting drawdowns.

I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to encourage members to support our Education Fund by making a tax-deductible donation. Our Education Fund provides us with the revenues that support our voter outreach activities, whether they be tabling events at community fairs, candidate debates, or preparation of our Top Ten handouts. As always, we appreciate your support.

To make a *tax-deductible donation to the Education Fund via your credit card, please click here: [Donation to LWV Education Fund VA-116](#)*

Or, you can send a check payable to the LWV Education Fund and note our League ID – VA 116 – in the Memo line

Please mail to: LWV-Prince William-Fauquier Area; 6151 Hemlock Court; Manassas, VA 20112. If you have questions, please reach out to me, Trish Freed, at freedsrt@verizon.net.



SIPS & CIVILITY

Join other League members for an in-person afternoon event!

On Sunday, March 20th, League members will gather at City Tavern, in Manassas.

We will begin at 3:30 P.m. in the Banquet Room.

The program: Voter Registration: Everything You wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask!

This program will provide a hands-on approach to registering voters. Even if you have completed the on-line training, you may be hesitant about registering prospective voters! During this program you will have the opportunity to hear about real experiences, register fellow members, and gain some experience! And of course, all of this can be done while sipping a beverage of your choice!

In addition, we will have a brief update on actions of the 2022 General Assembly, courtesy of Carol Noggle.

The official social event will end at 5 p.m. Consider staying longer and having dinner with fellow Leaguers! **Members are responsible for paying for their own libations and food.**



High School Voter Registration The 2021-2022 LWV-PWFA Program

The League of Women Voters of the Prince William Fauquier Area has a long-standing 15-year high school registration program in both Prince William and Fauquier County. As of February 28th, the League has **31 Certified Voter Registration Members**, who have **completed 1362 high school student**

registrations at 18 high schools, between July 1-February 28.

League Members who volunteer to register students are required to undergo “Third Party Voter Registration” training conducted by the Virginia Department of Elections (oral training sessions and online www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/registration-drives/). Certification must be renewed annually.

The LWV-PWFA League conducts its high school voter registration program in tandem with the Prince William Bar Association “So You’re 18” Program, and its interest in the importance of voting, and the Prince William Department of Elections’ voter registration responsibilities.

The “So You’re 18” program, conducted annually October – April, includes an information booklet, developed by the Virginia State Bar Conference of Local Bar Associations, which is distributed to all high school senior students during the event. The booklet contains information about a wide variety of legal rights, restrictions, and responsibilities (e.g., property owner tenant law, credit, and consumer law, etc.), that change when a young person turns 18 years of age. The comprehensive program that includes an in-person presentation at each high school, includes the importance of registering to vote.



Fauquier Unit News, Ruthann Litchford, Unit Director

Marsha Melkonian reports that she is involved with the Fauquier NAACP Membership and Education committees. In addition, she is involved in a 10-week session called Sacred Ground, put on by the Roanoke Episcopal Church. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America’s history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional

identity. Marsha also volunteers at Booker T. Washington National Monument where a series on the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments is being held. The series covers Reconstruction activities, and what we can learn about the impact of those times on today.

Fellow LWV member, **Kathryn Kadilak**, serves as the Leader for the new FCDC Media Group which encompasses the following media platforms: social media, digital and print ads, letters to the editor, and website administration. Their purpose, simply put, is to educate, engage, energize, and expand the FCDC base.

Barbara Amster informs us that the “Black Lives Matter Vigil for Action” is nearing the 90th consecutive Saturday of the vigil. It is held every Saturday, 10-10:45 am, at Courthouse Square, Old Town Warrenton. She encourages members to come and stand in solidarity with others to advocate for understanding and political action to end systemic racism. There are plenty of signs available for you to hold and homemade signs are welcomed. Additionally, there are BLM yard signs, bumper stickers, car magnets and buttons available at no charge.

The League presence at the vigils has mostly consisted of setting up a booth to register voters and pass out “Top Ten” and other voter info. During the last election, there was quite a bit of interest in getting applications for absentee ballots and information about restoration of felon's rights. Barbara proudly reports that the League’s presence at the vigil has been largely responsible for the growth in Fauquier County membership!

For more information, reach out to Barbara; autodidact1000@aol.com



League of Women Voters – Prince William Fauquier Area
Book Discussion List 2022 – 2023



Below are the titles that have been selected for our League's book discussion events. You can sign up for the discussion through SignUpGenius. Or contact Connie Gilman, Chair, if you have questions. conniewg51@gmail.com

April 4th, 2022, 11:30 – 1 P.M., Juke Box Diner, 8637 Sudley Road, Manassas, 20110.

Mastering Civility, Christine Porath

Incivility is silently chipping away at people, organizations, and our economy. Sights, insensitivities, and rude behaviors can cut deeply. Moreover, incivility hijacks focus.

In this book, Porath shows how people can enhance their influence and effectiveness with civility.

July 12, 11:30 – 1 P.M., Effingham Manor Winery, 14325 Trotters Ridge Place, Nokesville, VA. We will meet at the events center. Other beverages are available if you do not enjoy sipping some delicious Virginia wine!

Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know, Malcolm Gladwell

This is an intellectual adventure, a challenging and controversial excursion through history, psychology, and scandals taken straight from the news. Something is very wrong, Gladwell argues, with the tools and strategies we use to make sense of people we do not know. And because we do not know how to talk to strangers, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding in ways that have a profound effect on our lives and our world.

October 11, 6 P.M. – 7:30 P.M., Brittany's Restaurant and Sports Bar, 12449 Dillingham Sq., Woodbridge, 22192

The Color of Law, Richard Rothstein

Rothstein describes how the American government systematically imposed residential segregation: with undisguised racial zoning; public housing that purposefully segregated previously mixed communities; subsidies for builders to create whites-only suburbs; tax exemptions for institutions that enforced segregation; and support for violent resistance to African Americans in white neighborhoods.

January 12, 11:30 – 1 P.M., Olive Garden, Manassas

The President and the Freedom Fighter: Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, and Their Battle to Save America's Soul, Brian Kilmeade

In *The President and the Freedom Fighter*, Brian Kilmeade tells the little-known story of how two American heroes moved from strong disagreement to friendship, and in the process changed the entire course of history.



The PWC Racial and Social Justice Commission Report

The PWC Racial and Social Justice Commission Report was recently presented to the County Board of Supervisors. It centers on the state of racial and social justice for people of color within the county, with a focus on policing, the provision of government services, and public education. The Report includes both challenges and recommendations, with potential far reaching implications for citizens in Prince William County. The LWV-PWFA League has organized an Issue Study Committee to review the report and to provide a Policy Position recommendation for consideration by the League.



DEVELOPING LWV PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

The LWV Mission: “The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through election and advocacy.” Advocacy is conducted based on adopted LWV Policy Positions.

LWV Public Policy Positions:

The LWV Public Policy Positions are the League’s official statement setting forth the League’s point of view, as a result of conducting in-depth issue studies, which propose a position. Positions are adopted by Concurrence or Consensus, by delegates (local league representatives) at a Biennial Convention. The LWV formulates its Biennium “*List of Legislative Priorities*” based on the adopted Policy issue .

Issue Studies:

The Issue Studies are proposed by Local Leagues and after review by the LWV-VA Board of Directors, they are presented for adoption to the delegates at the Biennial Convention. Upon adoption, issue study committees are formed, and Local Leagues are requested to solicit volunteers. The LWV-PWFA League has a member serving on all four current LWV-VA Issue Study Committees for the 2021-2023 Biennium.

The LWV has established guidelines for conducting issue studies. Any given approved study, whether it be National, State, or Local, is thorough in its pursuit of facts and details. As the study progresses, a continuing discussion of pros and cons of each study element is discussed by the committee members. Prior to the results of the study being presented to the Convention delegates, study committee members fashion consensus questions that are then addressed by the membership.

Policy Position Resources:

- The Biennium “*LWV Positions for Actions*” (www.lwv-va.org) provides League members with the LWV-VA State-level Policy Positions on the adopted issues of study.
- The LWVUS “*Impact on Issues “A Guide to Public Policy Positions*” (www.lwv.org) provides members National-level adopted Policy Positions.

202-2023 LWV-VA Issue Studies:

Child Care: The COVID-19 epidemic shined a strong spotlight on the inadequate nature of our state’s childcare system with hundreds of private facilities unable to remain open. Women are leaving the workforce in record numbers, and counties are left to figure out on their own how to offer emergency childcare to residents who need it.

Education Equity: First, articulate quantitatively and qualitatively a definition of a high-quality education. This definition needs updating in the LWV-VA positions as education has changed rapidly in regard to technology, broadband, special needs, etc. Second, determine the cost of providing that defined high-quality of education to all students in the Commonwealth’s school divisions. Does the state provide local school divisions sufficient funds to ensure that “educational programs of high quality” are available to all students? This will require an in-depth analysis of the capacity of each local school division to determine how costs should be apportioned between the state and the localities to compensate for vast differences in local capacity. The goal is to assure equity for all students. Third, document how Virginia’s capacity and effort to provide high-quality education compared to other states’ funding for K-12 education. This will also include studying how other states fund school construction and modernization. In Virginia, this is the responsibility of each locality, resulting in wide discrepancies in the quality of school buildings and educational technology statewide.

Environmental Justice: The EPA defines “environmental justice” as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This study will review how Virginia can best implement environmental justice to promote fairness and halt and prevent future racial and economic inequities.

Money in Politics: The analysis and proposed positions developed by this Campaign Finance Reform Study will cover the full scope of financing from a donation through its expenditure including:

- Public disclosure of the donor,
- Transparency in actual use of funds before and after the election,
- Limits on personal use, and
- The Virginia executive branch structure to conduct effective oversight and enforcement.



NEWSLETTER HELP OPPORTUNNTY

Fellow members, if you have read through the newsletter this far, you may be thinking, “This woman can use some design help!” I welcome some assistance in formatting this newsletter. I find doing content easy, it is just making our newsletter more attractive the difficult part. So, if anyone out there can help me with formatting, please, please let me know! [Connie conniewg51@gmail.com](mailto:conniewg51@gmail.com)

League Meetings are Open to All Members

The 3rd Tuesday of the month is the Board of Directors meeting at 7:00-9:00 p.m.
The 3rd Sunday of the month is the General meeting 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Meetings are virtual unless otherwise noticed. Meeting notices are posted on SignUpGenius along with a signup request. You will receive a ZOOM “address” to easily join the meeting. No driving necessary!

Board of Directors

2021-2023

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Membership Outreach Director, Cathy Ring ring.cw@gmail.com
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Acting Action and Program Director, Janet Gorn jgorn4@verizon.net
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Meeting Co-Director, Laura Feld-Mushaw smushaw@cocast.net
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Issue Study PWC/RSJCR, Chair, Lorraine Schooner lschooner@comcast.net
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Newsletter Chair, Connie Gilman conniewg51@gmail.com
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