



**League of Women Voters
of Falls Church**

*A Voice for Citizens and
A Force for Change in the United States*

The League of Women Voters of Falls Church is a nonpartisan organization that serves the citizens of Falls Church City through encouraging informed and active participation in government, working to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influencing public policy through education and advocacy. For more information, go to www.lwvfallschurch.org.

Dear League Members:

Leave it to the League members to get a lot done! Our program planning meeting held on January 8th was very successful. As a result of actions taken, some interesting projects will be coming our way. Details are in the report elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Thanks to Starbucks at Broaddale Shopping Center for supplying the coffee, to Madalyn Cafruny for picking it up, and to Genie Flahey for delicious refreshments, including homemade muffins.

Several new and prospective members have asked about our meetings and activities. Our primary focus is voter education, which is ongoing throughout the year, but most visible during elections and when important issues surface in the City. Our website, www.lwvfallschurch.org, lists our calendar and events. Although we don't meet on a monthly basis, we do try to have programs several times during the year that are open to members and the public. Our next program, Lunch and Learn will be on February 8th and will feature speakers on the Zoning Ordinance. Details are in a separate article and a notice will also go out to members.

On the political side, keep an eye out for information on redistricting, as Gov. McDonnell has appointed an advisory committee to study the issue and make recommendations. LWV-VA has urged that the advisory committee be given more authority. The results of the 2010 Census will bring changes. Stay warm and stay informed!

Sincerely,
Ellen Salsbury
President

PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING REPORT

A small but hearty group of Leaguers braved the cold and snow on January 8th to attend our program planning meeting. We had some excellent discussions and made some good decisions.

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On the regional level, the League of Women Voters of the National Capitol Area (NCA) asked us to prioritize three proposed studies. We decided that the top priority was Safety of the Regional Water Supply. Second was Regional Efforts to Reduce the Carbon Footprint of the DC area and third was Metro Governance. We also voted to readopt all NCA current positions. Volunteers were asked to indicate interest in these studies.

On the state level, we voted to readopt current positions and to continue to take action on simplifying the process of restoring voting rights to felons who have completed prison sentences.

On the local level, Barry Buschow, our local action chair, along with Sally Phillips and Ruth Rogers, looked over our current local positions and made suggestions on updating and changing some wording. The information showing current wording and changes can be accessed by clicking on the following link,

http://origin.library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1103697757712-9/LWVPositionChgs2011-Approved_Edits.pdf.

League members need to look over the local position changes and notify Ellen Salsbury at ellensals@aol.com, if there are any concerns. Notification should be done within 10 days of the Bulletin's delivery.

League procedure is that recommendations of the program planning meeting are referred to the Board for adoption. In a Board meeting following the program planning meeting, NCA and LWV-VA positions were approved as suggested by the membership.

NEW LOCAL STUDY PROPOSALS

At the program planning meeting, two exciting new studies were brought forward. Each will need volunteers and given the topics, that should not be a problem. League procedure is that any study proposed at program planning is officially approved at the Annual Meeting in June. The study then takes place and consensus is taken. If an informational report is done, instead of an actual study, it is approved for research by the Board and goes forward as information only.

Barry Buschow has agreed to chair a study on Arts and Culture in the City. Marty Meserve and Gina Caceci have already agreed to work on the study and others are needed. Contact Barry at bbuschow@verizon.net. The Board has asked the committee to report back in the next month on the focus and scope of the study.

The Future of the Water System and its Impact on the Citizens is the other potential new study. A 2000 informational report on the water system will be used for reference. Because of League procedure on approving studies, this one may be an informational report as the earlier one was. We are investigating the procedure of an expedited study. Jeff Tarbert has agreed to work on this study/report and we will require several additional volunteers before it can go forward. When volunteers are in place, the focus and scope of this study will be examined by the Board. Contact Jeff at jtarbert@publicpower.org, if you are interested.

Redistricting Compresses 2011 Election Schedule in Virginia, Relies on New Mapping Technology

How will redistricting 2011 affect Falls Church? LWVFC members Madalyn Cafruny, Carl and Ellen Salsbury, and Edie Snyder attended a seminar held in Fairfax earlier this month to begin to get some answers

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to this question. The initial bottom line: redistricting as a result of the 2010 census will put significant pressure on the November 2011 election timetable in Virginia this year. In addition, computer mapping technology will make possible greater community involvement in redefining voting districts.

Following each decennial census, the country recasts its voting districts to ensure compliance with the US Constitution and "one man - one vote," the rule developed following court cases in the 1960s to ensure that voting districts are of equitable size and thus offer even representation in local, state, and federal legislative bodies. The Virginia Constitution also mandates redistricting every 10 years when new census figures are available. Because Falls Church votes as a whole for representatives to City Council and the School Board, redistricting does not impact the city's local elections. However, a reworking of the voting boundaries could affect who represents Falls Church in the Virginia House of Delegates and the Senate as well as the US House of Representatives.

Since final census numbers won't be released until mid-to-late February, voting district boundaries likely won't be redrawn until late April. The US Department of Justice then has 60 days to certify redistricting plans for the state under the 1965 Voting Rights Act, pushing primaries into late August or early September, barely in time for the November 8 general election. "The timeline is tricky for redistricting this year," said Fairfax County Board of Supervisor Chairman Sharon Bulova.

"The biggest change in redistricting in 2011 is technology and, specifically, computer mapping technology," noted David Poole, executive director of the Virginia Public Access Project, a nonprofit, nonpartisan group dedicated to increased public understanding of money in Virginia politics. Poole highlighted a contest among 13 Virginia universities and their political science departments to devise the fairest map using the same census data local and state legislative bodies have at their disposal. He also praised Fairfax County for its "open, transparent process to engage the community in the process of redistricting." Fairfax's process includes a task force with broad community representation and public access to technology to explore the impact of different district configurations.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia joined three other groups in sponsoring the January 7 seminar titled "How Redistricting 2011 Can Affect You"-the Voice of Vietnamese Americans, the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans in Virginia, and the Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations. In addition to Bulova and Poole, speakers included Michael Long, deputy attorney for Fairfax County; James Whitehorne, assistant chief of the US Census Bureau's Redistricting Data Office; and State Senator Janet Howell, chair of the Virginia Senate Privileges & Election Committee.

Additional points of interest from the seminar:

- The population of the United States is now nearly 309 million, and Virginia is home to 8 million.
- Virginia's population grew by almost 1 million people since the last census. While this means the number of Virginia's congressional seats remains 11, the state's population growth and where that growth has occurred require redistricting.

- Even though Fairfax County continues to grow, the county's population hasn't grown as fast as Loudon, Prince William, and other parts of the state. As a result, the county will lose representation in this year's redistricting process.
- Virginia, along with Louisiana, Mississippi, and New Jersey, holds elections in 2011 and so needs final census figures as soon as possible to begin the redistricting process.

For more information, please visit www.census.gov/rdo/, <http://dlsGIS.state.va.us>, <http://dlsGIS.state.va.us/Ref/2011Draw1.pdf>, and <http://lwv-va.org/redistrict.html> as starting points.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Date: February 8, 2011

Topic: What's the Latest on Zoning in Falls Church

Place: Pistone's Italian Inn, 6320 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church

Time: 11:30 AM

The City's Zoning Ordinance has been a topic of discussion for quite a while, so join us to hear what's going on. Speakers are John Murphy, past chair of the Zoning Ordinance Advisory Committee (ZOAC) and Cindy Mester, Acting Director of the Planning Dept. and Assistant City Manager. With the economy recovering and construction again in the news and tear-downs all over town, it should be an interesting meeting!

Seating is limited to 35, so reservations are a must. Contact Jinny Long at vfl@verizon.net with your your choice of entree. The cost is \$20.

Choose from the following:

Cannelloni (chicken, spinach, cheese with tomato cream sauce)

Eggplant Parmigiana

Garden Salad with Grilled Salmon

Chicken Picatta

Please RSVP by February 4th. Easiest access to the restaurant may be from Hillwood Avenue. Parking is available on both sides of the restaurant and in front.

Step Up If You'd Like to Become Part of the Leadership Team

You can give a lot and get a lot from LWVFC by becoming a member of its Board of Directors. Let us know if you'd like to share your skills by putting together programs, helping with fundraising and LWV promotion, or taking on special projects. Now or at a time in the future we'll match your talents with LWV needs.

The nominating committee for the June 2011-June 2012 board is comprised of Madalyn Cafruny (chair), Edie Smolinski, Genie Flahie, and Cindy Donaldson. Contact Madalyn by Friday, Feb. 11, if you're interested in becoming part of the LWVFC Board:

mcafruny@verizon.net.

[Forward email](#)