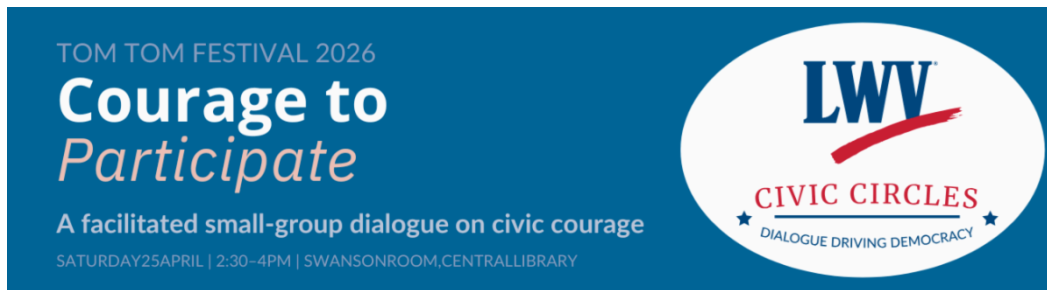




April 2026 "eVoter"

Courage to Participate

An Interactive Civic Circles Session



Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026

Time: 2:30-4:00pm

Location: Swanson Room, Central Library, Charlottesville

Join us for a timely and meaningful community conversation as part of the Tom Tom Festival.

In a time when civic engagement can feel overwhelming, polarizing, or even risky, courage often shows up not in grand gestures—but in everyday choices: to listen, to stay engaged, to speak with care, and to remain curious across differences.

As part of the festival's 2026 theme of **Courage**, the League invites you to **Courage to Participate**, a facilitated small-group dialogue focused on building civic courage—our ability to listen, speak, and engage thoughtfully across viewpoints. This interactive Civic Circles session offers a welcoming space to practice understanding others, share your perspective, and strengthen the skills that support healthy civic engagement.

Rather than debating issues or advocating positions, Civic Circles focus on human experience, dialogue, and connection—helping participants explore how courage is practiced in ways that strengthen our shared future.

Whether you are new to community dialogue or experienced in civic engagement, this program invites you to connect, reflect, and grow alongside fellow community members.

Come be part of the conversation...courage starts with participation!

For more information and event updates, visit the [LWV-CVA website](#)

Redistricting Referendum

Remember to Vote

Early voting is happening and available for the next 2 Saturdays.
Election Day is **April 21st**.

This is a highly contested measure and there has been high turnout in the Western and North East parts of the state. Help make Central Virginia a leader in having voices heard by voting and encouraging friends, family, and colleagues to vote.

Help Wanted

Let's Grow Our Impact!

Voter Services

As a League chapter, we're ready to stretch—growing both our membership and our impact at the local, state, and federal levels. To make that happen, we're evolving how we work.

We're proposing to split our current Voter Services Committee into two focused areas:

- Voter Registration
- Advocacy & Education

To support this shift, we're looking to add a new leadership role to our board focused on voter registration—helping decide which events we attend, coordinating volunteers, and expanding our reach in the community.

Kim Harris will continue leading the Advocacy & Education work, including Civic Circles and Listening Tables, and will partner closely with you to ensure a smooth and supported transition. You'll also be partnering in the future, as many events will have both registration and education components to it, and you'll be drawing from the same pool of people for volunteers.

If you've been looking for a meaningful way to get more involved—this is it!

Communications Associate

Looking to get involved with the League but juggling work or family commitments? We may have the perfect opportunity for you!

We're seeking a member to help write and distribute Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for upcoming events to local media outlets — radio, TV, print, and online. No prior experience is needed; full training is provided, and the writing is straightforward.

This role is flexible, requires only a small time commitment, and offers the chance to work with a collaborative team dedicated to spreading the word about our public events.

If you are interested in either role or would just like to learn more, please contact Lisa Hilgartner at lww@lww-cva.org

Save the Dates *Upcoming Events*

April 8, 2026
New Member Meeting

A Zoom meeting for new members will be held on April 8 from 7:00–8:00 PM. We'll cover the many ways to get involved with LWV-CVA and provide an overview of our work. All members are welcome to attend.

Contact Lisa Hilgartner at president@lww-cva.org for the link.

June 13, 2026
2026 Annual Meeting

Guest Speaker: Corinne Field, Assoc. Professor in the Dept. of Women, Gender, and Sexuality at the University of VA.

Date: Saturday, June 13th, 2-4 pm

Location: Unitarian Universalist Church, 717 Rugby Rd. Charlottesville VA 22903

Each year at our Annual Meeting, we reflect on the past year's accomplishments and prepare for the year ahead. Members will elect new officers, including the President, Secretary, and Membership Director, as well as approve the 2026–2027 budget. We will also vote on a proposal to combine our two incorporations into a single education fund. As always, the discussion promises to be lively and informative.

In celebration of our 80th year, we're harkening back to the League's early days, when members gathered for "Ladies Teas" that combined education, orientation, and fundraising. In that spirit, we'll serve tea, coffee, and other refreshments, along with cakes and cookies.

We hope you'll join us—we'll share more details as the date approaches.

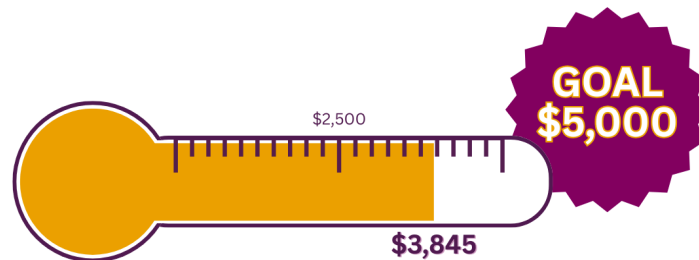
Updates

New Board Appointment

Please welcome Elisabeth MacNamara to the board as our new Parliamentarian. Elisabeth has served on League boards at the local, state (in Georgia and Texas), and national levels. Her depth of experience in League operations will be invaluable as we move forward.

She succeeds Sue Lewis, who has returned home to Geneva, NY.

Fund Drive



As of March 28, 2026 we have raised \$3,845.00 through our Fund Drive!

Many thanks to all who have contributed so far - your support helps us continue the important work we do!

March in Review

The Colonnades Event

March 17, 2026

We connected with residents to provide information about upcoming ballots and update voter registrations — this continues to be a wonderful opportunity to connect with engaged residents.

Thanks to Rosalie Simari and Carol Cutler for hosting!



Charlottesville High School Voter Registration

March 26, 2026

At Charlottesville High School, volunteers met with enthusiastic, engaged students eager to learn about the voting process and registered **14 new voters!** Students were especially intrigued by our new opportunity to spin the wheel, answer a civics question, and get a prize!

We're excited about the potential to grow this effort into a broader partnership with Charlottesville City Schools and expand outreach to county high schools in the coming year.

Thank you to Gweddette Crummie, Miriam Fleitman, Pam Dolgrin, and Anne Geraty!



No Kings Rally

March 29, 2026

League members participated in the No Kings Rally, joining community members in support of democratic values, civic engagement and protesting against authoritarianism.

Committee News

Voter Services Committee by Kim Harris

It's been an energizing month for our Voter Services team, with outreach efforts reaching both community residents and local students. From connecting with engaged voters at The Colonnades to registering 14 new voters at Charlottesville High School, our volunteers are making a meaningful impact. These efforts continue to build momentum as we expand partnerships and reach new audiences across our community.

We have a full calendar ahead and would love more volunteers to help us meet the moment:

- **PVCC** – April 8, 11:30 AM–2 PM. Always a great event—and we need extra hands!
- **IX Art Park (The Market at IX)** – April 11, 8 AM–12 PM. This is a fun, lively setting to register voters and share information about local issues.
- **Tom Tom Festival** – April 25, 2–4:30 PM. We're especially excited for this one. We'll be launching Civic Circles at the community level with the theme: **"The Courage to Participate"**—exploring how everyday acts of listening, speaking, and staying engaged shape our shared future.
- **Batesville Day Festival** – May 2, 10 AM–2 PM. A community favorite! Join us for the parade (led by our President!) and stop by our education table.

We already have events scheduled through early July—so there are plenty of opportunities to get involved. Whether you can help once or regularly, your time makes a real difference.

Come be part of it!

Natural Resources Committee by Peggy Gilges

In spite of the Fluvanna Planning Commission recommending denial, the [Board of Supervisors voted on March 18 to approve a new gas-fired power plant near Scottsville](#). Should the project receive required state level permits, it will create a new source of regional air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Central VA is being criss-crossed with upgraded and new electric transmission lines and substations largely to accommodate data centers, at ratepayer expense and with insuPicient assessment of environmental impacts. A recently proposed 765 kV transmission line, called [ValleyLink](#), would run 115 miles from Campbell County to Madison, cutting an industrial "super highway" through largely rural, forested and agricultural properties. Legislation in the 2026 Virginia legislative session would confirm the ability of localities to test sewage sludge for toxic per-

and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS, prior to land application as fertilizer. Another bill would restrict sludge with high levels of two particularly harmful PFAS chemicals (PFOA and PFOS) from being applied to land beginning in 2027. These bills are a step forward for Virginia, but don't do enough to prevent contamination of soil and water or protect human and environmental health. The NRC's next meeting will be held April 27th. If environmental issues are of interest to you, please join us!

Healthcare Taskforce by Stephanie Lowenhaupt

The General Assembly adjourned on Saturday March 14th, although a final biennium budget was not agreed upon. The Senate and House versions need to be reconciled to come up with a balanced budget that can be sent to the Governor for review. In the Interim a budget committee was formed to come up with a final budget.

This directly impacts on the budget amendments we have been tracking regarding additional funding for Medicaid, Free and Charitable Health Clinics, Restoration of funding to FAMIS (Family Access to Medical Insurance) Pre-natal (cut by Governor Youngkin). This program provides critical maternal health care coverage for over 11,300 people in 2025). The General Assembly will reconvene on April 22nd. The Budget session will be April 23rd. We will continue to follow the state budget and advocate as indicated.

International Relations and Foreign Government by Gerry Kruger

On March 19, 2026, Lois Sandy once again hosted our International Relations/Federal Government meeting at Linden House. Anita Pilling directed our discussion of the current war in Iran. Carol Cutler, Kathy Sudduth, Dena Imlay, Bobbie Williams, Miriam Fleitman, Rosalie Simari, Kerin Yates, Diane Skalak, and Gerry Kruger attended. Also attending were Janet Parker from Louisa and Linda Smith, a resident at Linden House.

The topic of the day was Gulf War 3, which began on February 28th. Gulf wars have had a huge impact in the modern Middle East, and now we're in the midst of one that President Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu have declared on Iran without the backing of the US Congress and with a mission that appears to be vague and constantly changing.

In Gulf Wars 1 (1991) and 2 (2003), the US had many allies for support, even NATO. In today's war with Iran, getting allies for support has been difficult. Our group discussed why our former allies no longer feel they can rely on the United States, Iran's attacks on Gulf states, and the Sunni-Shia divide that has separated Iranian Muslims since 632. We believe democracy is more likely to develop in a Sunni state because Shias believe that leadership in the Muslim community belongs solely to the Prophet Muhammad's bloodlines, and the leaders in a theocracy must be obeyed above all else. Sunnis encourage believers to form their own relationship with Allah. The treatment of those who fail to follow Shia laws in Iran is brutal and uncompromising.

We also considered how this war should end, the consequences of ending it prematurely, and the wisdom of leaving a permanent military presence in Iran.

Our next meetings will be held on the third Thursdays of April, May, and June at 1:00 pm. There will be no IR/FG meetings in July and August.

Update Your LWV-CVA Handbook

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Edith McHenry
3337 Garth Rd.
Charlottesville, VA 22901
Edithmch@gmail.com
434-981-5453

Lisa Herndon
910 Belluno Ct.
Charlottesville, VA 22911-3623
llozman@me.com
678-793-9873

Sara Ratcliffe
199 Morbel Lane
Barboursville, VA 22923
sarabvll@gmail.com
202-422-3166

Carrie Slinkman-Kerwick
6668 Thomas Jefferson Parkway
Palmyra, VA 22963
slinkmankec@vcu.edu
434-906-3300

LWV CVA Calendar of Events

April 2026

Mark your Calendars

April 8 7pm, New Members Meeting, via Zoom
Contact president@lww-cva.org to join

April 14 5pm, Voter Services Meeting, via Zoom
Contact kwharris555@gmail.com to join

April 16 1pm, IR/FG Meeting, Linden House

April 16 3pm, Board of Directors Meeting, Hybrid via Zoom or
Northside Library

April 25 2pm, "Courage to Participate" Tom Tom Festival Event,
Jefferson-Madison Regional Library

League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area

President: Lisa Hilgartner

eVoter Editor: Jessica Harris

Visit our website: lwv-cva.org



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 education and advocacy. We are committed to applying the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our operations and activities. We support governmental policies that apply these principles in addressing the social, environmental and economic problems in our communities.

League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area | PO Box 2786 | Charlottesville, VA 22902 US

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