



League in Action

April 7, 2021

President's Message

Do you want to "Rep the League?" We are joining with the LWV of the Fairfax Area and Falls Church for this new program just announced by LWV US. The 117th Congress provides League advocates with an extra opportunity to connect with freshman and returning lawmakers. **State and local Leagues are expected to interview their congressional delegates and report back by June 1, 2021.**

Read our guidance to find a background on congressional interviews, meeting tips, and information on reporting back to LWV US. More information is available at https://www.lwv.org/league-management/congressional-interview-guide-and-materials?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=03112021

This is a great way for new members to learn about the League – so this is NOT open just to veterans. Contact me for information.

Save the date for our virtual Annual Meeting on June 5. Our keynote speaker is

Samia Byrd, Arlington's Chief Race and Equity Officer. The meeting will be held from 10 AM – 12 PM.

We are looking for two volunteers to read the minutes – they should be no longer than five or six pages. Please let me know if you want to help out.

Thanks,
Joan

We need help spreading the voter registration work at farmers markets!

Our sandwich boards are back in action with new inserts detailing information for the June 8 primary.

We have gotten permission from several farmers markets in Arlington AND Alexandria City to set up our boards while they are open. It would be great to have teams of four assigned to each location so you can alternate pick up and drop offs and also alternate weeks - this way the burden is not on one person.

Please complete the Sign Up Genius below. We can start as soon as April 10 (most are on weekends) and run this project through May 29,

We will have some more in person voter registration opportunities this summer in outdoor locations so **stay tuned!**

THANKS

[Sandwich Board sign up here](#)

We have several opportunities available to anyone who can share their talents with the League!

Leadership/Talent Development Team

We need to develop new talent for committee chairs and the board. One of the problems with COVID is that we have been unable to meet new members and sufficiently inform them of how they can incorporate their talents into the League. **If you have training or even a keen interest in this arena**, please email Joan at LWVarlingtonVa@gmail.com.

Questions for Vote 411

We need to populate the questions to the candidates running for the House of Delegates in the June 8 primary. These are questions that each candidate answers and loads into Vote411. Vote411 is our one stop shop for voters where they get information about the candidates, their polling places, and important deadlines for voting. **Please submit your questions by March 30** to Anna Weber anna.a.weber@gmail.com.

Fundraising

I know it is a dirty word, but we can't operate without funds. **Do you like to host** contests or restaurant nights – perhaps a wine tasting? **Do you have any experience writing grants?** It is important that we treat fundraising as an integral part of all our work. Contact Joan if interested.

Apply for a New Task Force on League Structure

As the League of Women Voters enters its second century of voter education and advocacy, we are seeking to ensure that our organizational structure is optimally

aligned for the greatest possible success. The League Structure Task Force will assess our current operating model and make recommendations for improvements that will result in a stronger League network, more engaged members, and volunteers from all walks of life, increased organizational efficiency, and, ultimately, greater mission impact on behalf of voters. **This task force will meet via Zoom one to two times per month from April to December 2021**, with the possibility of extending if necessary. New and veteran members are encouraged to apply. **The deadline is April 1.**

[Apply to the task force here](#)

League 101 Meeting - April 11

New to the League or just curious about how advocacy, education and outreach programs work? Have a question about the League you have been dying to ask? Join **Nancy Tate**, former Executive Director, LWVUS. and **Diane Hibino** from the Montgomery County, MD League of Women Voters chapter for our League of Women Voters 101 program.

Allison Brown is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: **LWV 101**

Time: **Apr 11, 2021 03:30 PM** Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83907680299>

Meeting ID: 839 0768 0299

One tap mobile

+19294362866,,83907680299# US (New York)
+13017158592,,83907680299# US (Washington DC)

Dial by your location

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 839 0768 0299

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83907680299>

EVENTS

April 18

Women in Prison: A Problem NOT a Solution

A Panel Discussion

Sunday, April 18, 2 - 4 pm

with -

National Perspective: **Aleks Kajstura**, Legal Director, Prison Policy Initiative, and
Author of *Women's Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie*

Virginia Perspective: **Claire Guthrie Gastanaga**, Executive Director, ACLU of

Virginia; Virginia response to Kajstura's study: *Women in the Criminal Justice System*

Local Perspective: **Areshini Pather**, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney

Keeping women out of Virginia's jails and prison should not be hard, all things considered. But all things are often neither considered nor supported. That's one quixotic situation members of the LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee were challenged with as they planned the League's April 18 Sunday Seminar. In search of deeper understanding and momentum for systemic change, the seminar will draw together influential national, state and local justice advocates to underscore the reality of women caught up in the criminal justice system.

Aleks Kajstura's research produced *Women's Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie*, a troubling study of 231,000 women and girls incarcerated in the US. In tandem, the Virginia ACLU led by **Claire Guthrie Gastanaga** launched *Women in the Criminal Justice System* focused on Virginia. In Charlottesville, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney **Areshini Pather**, formerly a public defender, knows firsthand the anguish sentencing brings down on women and their families.

The targeted focus on justice reform and groundbreaking action in the special legislative session in Richmond, invites communities to look more deeply at Virginia's local justice systems with thoughts on reform. The panel for the Sunday Seminar will aim to do just that. Join us for this important discussion.

[RSVP here](#)



Save the dates

It is Candidate Forum Season!

May 2 at 3 PM

Join us for a forum between the candidates for seats to the General Assembly. We are featuring the candidates who will be facing off in the June 8 primary.

We will have one for Alexandria candidates as well - date TBD

May 1 - 10 AM

LWV of the National Capital Area - Annual Meeting

We are looking for delegates - please email Joan for information/

May 22 & 23

**League of Women Voters 40th Biennial Convention - Virtual
Registration is open now!**

To review the agenda and register please go to:

<https://lwvvaconvention.eventbrite.com>

June 5

Our Annual Meeting will be June 5, 2021 – 10 AM. Our keynote speaker is **Samia Byrd**, Chief Race and Equity Officer of Arlington County.

Yes, we will still sadly be virtual but at least we can be together in some way.

FOR THE BIG PICTURE

From James Madison's Montpelier -

Constitutional Toolkit

Challenges to the Constitution

with Guest Speaker David Hudson

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 7:00 pm Eastern

Many of the current challenges facing our Constitution relate to competing ideas of freedom and liberty, individual and collective choice, and how to define “good” democratic practice. Join **Professor David Hudson** as we explore current challenges to the constitution, including everything from COVID vaccines, to the role of protest and civil disobedience, to “cancel culture” and freedom of expression.

David L. Hudson, Jr., an Assistant Professor of Law, teaches Legal Information and Communication at Belmont University. He is the author, co-author, or co-editor of more than 40 books. For much of his career, he has worked on First Amendment issues

[Register for the link here](#)

Constitutional Toolkit

The Right to Vote

with Sondra Cosgrove

Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 7:00 pm

Voting is one of the most important elements of our participatory democracy, but did you know that the Constitution doesn't actually give you the right to vote? In the final session of the Toolkit series, we will examine the various Amendments that have protected your vote as well as additional measures that are meant to prevent discrimination and vote dilution. Guided by **Dr. Sondra Cosgrove**, we will cover redistricting controversies, and the impact of state-law voter qualifications including voter identification requirements, documentary proof-of-citizenship statutes, and felon disenfranchisement laws. We'll also address recent concerns over potential flaws in the U.S. election system.

Sondra Cosgrove is a history professor at the College of Southern Nevada and serves as the Executive Director of Vote Nevada, a nonprofit civic engagement organization. Sondra received a Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, with areas of specialization in the U.S. West, Native American History, and Latin America. Currently, Sondra is actively involved in a wide range of college service, including working through the CSN Women's Alliance to deconstruct barriers that block

women from success. As the Executive Director of Vote Nevada, Sondra engages in community outreach, civic empowerment, and advocacy for civil rights.

[Register for April 20 here](#)

[Find links to earlier presentations in this series here](#)

From the National Constitution Center -

Do We Need a Third Reconstruction?

Thursday, April 29, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. ET

In light of the critical events and national debates that have happened over the past year and beyond regarding race, rights, and equality, the National Constitution Center is hosting an online discussion exploring the question: “Do we need a third Reconstruction?” **Sherrilyn Ifill**, president and counselor-director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund; professor **Wilfred Codrington III** of Brooklyn Law School; political scientist **William Allen**; and professor **Kurt Lash** of the University of Richmond School of Law and author of a new two-volume series, *The Reconstruction Amendments*, join for a discussion on the history of Reconstruction and its legacy, the civil rights movement and constitutional change, and whether or not America needs a third era of Reconstruction. *This program is presented with support from Citizens.*

[Register for the link here](#)

Podcasts from the Constitution Center

Why Do the Innocent Plead Guilty?

Judge **Jed Rakoff** unveils his new book *Why the Innocent Plead Guilty and the Guilty Go Free: And Other Paradoxes of Our Broken Legal System* with former Judge **Paul Cassell** of the University of Utah College of Law, **Carissa Byrne Hessick** of the University of North Carolina Law School, and moderator **Jeffrey Rosen**. They discuss the current challenges in American criminal justice today and share innovative proposals for reform.

[Listen to the podcast here](#)

Women Constitutional Visionaries

Hear about women constitutional visionaries from landmark eras in our nation's history—sharing the legendary contributions of women to the founding; the fight for abolition, the right to vote, and the 19th Amendment; the civil rights and equal rights movements; and more. **Martha Jones**, author of *Vanguard: How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All*, and **Lisa Tetrault**, author of *The Myth of Seneca Falls: Memory and the Women's Suffrage Movement, 1848-1898*, join host **Jeffrey Rosen**.

[Listen to the podcast here](#)

From the National Conference of State Legislatures -

Incoming - Primary Season!

Primary Changes: The Hot Trend of 2021?

The Canvass - March 2021

[Read the feature in The Canvass here](#)

A few good books

If you are looking for a book to read - check out fellow Leaguers suggestions for book of the month for the LWV-Arl book club.

Martha Jones' book *Vanguard*, featured in the Constitution Center podcast above was the book discussed at the March book club meeting.

[See the list here](#)

It is time to log your action!

The Advocacy Challenge ends April 14, 2021.

Please log all of your testimony, calls, emails, letters, and meetings with elected state officials and their staff, and letters to the editor. This could help your Local League win the Challenge and helps inform advocacy planning. Go now to bit.ly/LWVVAChallenge.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

LWV US Statement for Senate Rules Committee Hearing on S1, the "For the People Act"

Virginia Kase, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States, addressed the US Senate Rules and Administration Committee to express the League's strong support for S1, the For the People Act, the transformational democracy reform package that makes elections fairer and restores power to the hands of the American people.

[Read her statement here](#)

LWV US Statement on Gun Violence in Boulder, Colorado

LWV of Boulder County, LWV of Colorado, and LWV of the United States grieve the senseless tragedy in Boulder, Colorado, on Monday, when a man armed with an assault rifle shot and killed ten people at a grocery store.

[Read the statement here](#)

Voting Rights Groups Sue To Stop Voter Suppression Bill in Georgia

LWV of Georgia, along with partners, filed a lawsuit against the state of Georgia to prevent enforcement of SB 202, an omnibus voter suppression bill signed by Georgia

Governor Brian Kemp last week.

[Read the statement here](#)

LWV Supports Senate Filibuster Reform for a Healthy Democracy

The American people are tired of seeing this archaic tool used and abused to delay progress. It is time to amend the filibuster for the health and safety of our democracy.

[Read the statement here](#)

LWVUS and LWVGA Condemn Hate Crimes Against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders

[Read the statement here](#)

**"THERE CAN BE NO LIBERTY IN
THE FACE OF RACIST AND
XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE."**

LWV

LWV-VA April Virginia Voter

Because We're a League

Deb Wake, LWV-VA President

LWV-VA Nominating Committee

Sue Lewis, chair; **Les Solomon**, **Anu Sahai**, **Andrienne Konstas**, **Erni Bridges**

Redistricting Update

Sara Fitzgerald, LWV-VA Redistricting Issue Group

Spring is for Cultivation

Julia Tanner, LWV-VA Action Coordinator

It Took Faith to Move Mountains: Virginia is the First Southern State to Abolish the Death Penalty

Rev. Dr. LaKeisha Cook, Justice Reform Organizer at the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy

Marijuana Legislation: A Start but Not Far Enough

Ashna Khanna, Legislative Director, ACLU of Virginia; **Chelsea Higgs** Wise, Executive Director, Marijuana Justice; **Valerie Slater**, Executive Director, RISE For Youth

Criminal Justice Reforms

Michelle Woolley, Managing Director, Justice Forward Virginia

All Virtual General Assembly Has Ended

Megan Rhyne, Executive Director, Virginia Coalition for Open Government

[Read the April Virginia Voter here](#)

Committees

April 18– 2 PM – **Book Group**

Kill Switch: The Rise of the Modern Senate and the Crippling of American Democracy by Adam Jentleson Contact **Joan**

Joan@joanporte.com

April 19 – 7 PM – **Redistricting** – Contact Ann Sharp

sharpab2828@gmail.com

April 21 – 7 PM - **Election Integrity** – Contact Lisa Koteen Gerchick

lkoteengerchick@gmail.com

April 26 – 1 PM - **Civics (IWNI)** - Contact Joan

Joan@joanporte.com

April 26 – 7 PM - **Affordable Housing** – Congact Joan

Joan@joanporte.com

What brought you to the League?



Several friends spoke highly of the League. I was interested in the work of our General Assembly, and heard rave reviews of the League's pre-session event. I was also immersed in ERA ratification communications and events coordination, and saw our Local League needed an ERA coordinator.

-- Julia Tanner
LWV of Arlington

Circle of Life

Congratulations to Board member Seema Jain and her husband Amol as they welcome their third daughter, Rekha Kakad Jain, born March 22.

Look for next newsletter April 21



Copyright © 2021 League of Women Voters - Arlington, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

