



League in Action

March 17, 2021

President's Message

Do you like to observe government in action? Are you a sleuth at heart? Then you are a perfect person to join our Observer Corps. Protecting our right to know is integral to the health of our democracy. Decisions that determine how our schools will be run, at what level community safety programs will be funded, and how land in our towns will be used impact our lives and are vital to our well-being. These kinds of decisions need to be made with public input and oversight. One important way to ensure that is to observe government meetings.

We are observing environmental, infrastructure, transportation, election and board and council meetings in **Arlington County and Alexandria City**. Attached is a report from one of our observers, **Judy Collins**, who attended the Arlington C2E2 or the Arlington Climate Change, Energy and Environment Committee.

If you are interested in learning more about Observer Corps, please contact me at lwvarlingtonva@gmail.com

[Read Judy's report on the C2E2 committee meeting](#)

LWV Arlington has mailed more than 1200 postcards to friends around the country urging Congress to pass DC Statehood. We have also distributed 30 yard signs.

The DC League is having a virtual watch party for the March 22 hearing -

- **DCVote Virtual H.R. 51 Hearing Watch Party: Monday, March 22, 2021
10:30 AM - 2:30 PM ET**

[Sign up here](#)

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. The deadline is April 1.

[Apply HERE](#)

Thank your legislators

We've reached the end of the legislative session. Important goals were achieved! Every Virginia legislator should be thanked for their votes in support of access to our democracy. **Please express your appreciation and then log it!** Go now to bit.ly/LWVVChallenge.

[Read LWV VA invitation to thank your legislators here](#)

Video Editing

We can use a few people who can do basic video editing. We can turn our radio show hosted by **Krysta Jones**, into a video production but need some assistance with editing, If you have some knowledge and are interested in helping out it should take no more than five or eight hours a month at most.

To volunteer or have questions answered, please contact **Krysta** at krysta.n.jones@gmail.com.

LWV VA Convention: Delegates - A Great Way to Learn How the League Operates

The LWV Virginia Virtual Convention is May 22 -23. There is no better way for members to learn how the League operates. Delegates are required to attend the morning plenary sessions on the mornings of May 22 and 23. The afternoon of May 22 will see optional but informative workshops,

If you are interested please contact **Joan** at lvarlingtonva@gmail.com.

It is time to log your action! **The Advocacy Challenge ends soon.** 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.

Board member Krysta Jones reflects on being named "strong woman in Virginia history"



Read Krysta's commentary at ARLnow on lessons she is taking from this recognition

What brought you to the League?



I was ready to get more involved in issues in my county. I knew from past experience with the League of Women Voters of NJ (a long time ago) that the League is a trusted organization that informs and engages.

– Ann
LWV of NJ

When I moved to a new part of the state 5 years ago, I didn't know who any of our elected officials were. I was familiar with the League's voting guide and their nonpartisan stature was particularly attractive in a highly polarized climate.

-- Deb Wake
LWV of the Fairfax Area



I grew disillusioned by partisan politics when told I had to deliver a yard sign for a candidate I didn't support. Politics should not revolve around parties and personalities but around issues. That is what makes the League so important especially in this hyper-partisan country.

--Joan Porte
LWV of Arlington

EVENTS

March 28

Voting Rights Panel

March 28, 12-1:15pm EST

Join Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ to learn from area non-profit organizations about voting rights initiatives in Virginia and nationwide. Real change comes from the ability to vote, and across the country, many in our communities face restrictions that stop them from having a voice through voting. From voter roll maintenance to accessibility of polling places to strict ID requirements, the issues are far-ranging and disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, and Disabled people. Attendees will leave the panel with action steps on how to ensure everyone can participate in our country's democracy.

Organizations represented on the panel: NAACP, The Arc, Four Directions, Spread the Vote, Reclaim Our Vote, and League of Women Voters.

[RSVP](#)

[Facebook event link](#)



Save the dates!

May 1

LWV NCA Annual Meeting

May 21- 23

LWV VA virtual Convention

This year's theme is *Democracy for All – Now is the Time*.

Contact Joan if you want to be a delegate!

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

Conversations and classes from the Center for the Constitution

Compromise and the Constitution in a Polarized America

TODAY Wednesday, March 17, 2021 • 12 - 1 p.m. ET

The National Constitution Center and the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University present a new panel in their ongoing partnership of conversations about how to restore the guardrails of American democracy. Join political scientist **Steven Teles** of Johns Hopkins University; **Sarah Binder** of the George Washington University and the Brookings Institution; director of the U.S. Democracy Program at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation **Daniel Stid**; and president of the Manhattan Institute **Reihan Salam**, for an important discussion on the possibilities for compromise and deliberation in a polarized time. **Jeffrey Rosen**, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, moderates.

This program is presented in partnership with the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

[Register here](#)

Slavery in America Featuring Judge Theodore McKee

March 19 at 1 p.m. ET

In this Friday session, Judge **Theodore McKee**, United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, joins National Constitution Center President and CEO **Jeffrey Rosen** to discuss slavery in America from the Constitution to Reconstruction. This session will explore the Constitution, the 13th, 14th and 15th

Amendments, and the Reconstruction founders' vision of a "Second Founding" for our nation. Judge McKee will also talk about his legal career and his work on the Court of Appeals, as well as answer questions from participants.

[Register here](#)

Battles for Equality in America: The 14th Amendment

March 26 at 1 p.m. ET

This session explores the 14th Amendment and the battles for equality in America. The session examines the clauses of the 14th Amendment and the battle over their meaning from Reconstruction to the Supreme Court's landmark decision on marriage equality in Obergefell. This session will explore the America's first and second civil rights movements, the Constitution and women, and modern interpretations of the 14th Amendment.

[Register here](#)

Constitution 101: The Constitutional Convention

April 9 at 1 p.m. ET

This session examines the issues and events that led to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in the summer of 1787, including the weakness of the Articles of Confederation, Shay's Rebellion, and the growing need for a new national government. Participants will also explore the Convention, and its major turning points and the compromises—including the Connecticut Compromise, the Electoral College,

the Three-Fifths Compromise, and the Slave Trade Clause.

[Register here](#)

[Watch sessions live on Youtube here](#)

Committees

March 17 – 7 PM - **Election Integrity** – contact **Lisa Koteen Gerchick**
lkoteengerchick@gmail.com

March 21 – 2 PM – **Book Group**
Vanguard: *How Black Women Broke Barriers, Won the Vote, and Insisted on Equality for All* by Martha S. Jones contact **Joan**
Joan@joanporte.com

March 22 – 7 PM – Affordable Housing – contact **Joan**
Joan@joanporte.com

March 29 - 1 PM - **Civics** - contact **Joan**
Joan@joanporte.com

Look for next newsletter April 7



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