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## **League in Action**

March 18, 2020

## **President's Message**

My great-niece told her dad, "This is going to go down in history." She is correct. We are in a very odd and unsettling point of history. However, as I always say, I love the Arlington League. I sent an email out last week, asking for our non-at risk of COVID-19 members to help if our at-risk members needed something. Within 2 hours, I had more than 20 people emailing offering to help!

This is the time for us to come together and no group exemplifies that spirit better than Arlington Leaguers.

We will keep assessing our future events and voter outreach as this pandemic continues.

Please see the list below of other ways we can help fellow Arlingtonians during this

pandemic.

In the meantime, be well, stay safe. This too shall pass.

Joan

P.S. Many thanks to our friends at the Bayou Bakery at 1515 N. Courthouse Road. As part of the celebration of women suffrage they participated in a County-wide bake sale and donated their profits to LWV Arlington. Even in these very uncertain economic times they are supporting our work. If you cannot get to the bakery, you may consider buying a gift card online.

Thanks Bayou.

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## **Responding to Emerging Urgent Community Needs**

**We are in new territory as COVID-19 comes to Arlington, and community needs related to housing and food security are surfacing. We ask our membership to be aware of these appeals.**

**-from Arlington Food Assistance Center: excerpt from message to the community from AFAC:**

**We have already seen a sharp decrease in food donations from our local grocery stores.** AFAC has begun to purchase more food to offset the drop of food available on our shelves. [Please think about making a donation to AFAC to help us keep our warehouse full for our families in need.](#)

If this continues long-term, **many of those working in the service industries may be affected which may result in a significant increase in the demand for our services.** AFAC is committed to serving all in need and will remain ready and determined to serve the least fortunate and most vulnerable in our community.

[Read the full message/donate or volunteer here](#)

**-from VOICE - Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community**

**Engagement:** Voice has heard from many families that they are being told not to report to work. They are stressed about their lost of income, and worried about paying their rents.

The non profits running CAF (Charity Aid Foundation of America) will provide wraparound services to keep their residents housed and safe. This is not the case for those renting in the market rate arena.

Please sign and share the following VOICE petition to the Arlington County Board to make sure residents are not evicted due to COVID-19.

[Read the full letter from VOICE leaders here](#)

[Sign the petition to the county board here](#)

**-from OPTin - One Pantry at a Time organized by Teachers in**

**Arlington:**This was organized by some teachers and parents. They are purchasing gift cards to Giant and Safeway and asking social workers at the

schools to distribute them to families whose kids rely on the free breakfast and lunch--all 8000 of them. -

[Contribute here](#)

**-from AAUW member Marcy Seitel regarding UNITE HERE - call for Spanish, English and Amharic speakers** to volunteer to help laid off workers starting March 18:

My son and daughter-in-law work for the union, UNITE HERE. Because of the pandemic, they now have 6,000 members locally who have been laid off. Being low wage employees for subcontractors in the entertainment and hospitality industry (in airports, hotels, cafeterias of schools and organizations), these workers cannot telecommute. They are economically precarious because of their income level.

Unemployment will cover 60% of their income, but they need to apply for it. The union is looking for people who could volunteer to help workers do the applications for unemployment online. You can do this from your home. It would involve talking with a person on the phone and helping that person navigate the unemployment website. You would be given instructions on how to do everything you would need to do.

**The first day you would be needed is Wednesday, March 18 (today) - but - there will be other days after this.**

Many people speak English, and there are also many Spanish speakers and some Amharic speakers.

**This is a way to help** people through extremely difficult and frightening health and economic times.

**Please let me know** if you are able to help. And please share this information with anyone you think may be able to help. This is an important way to keep people out of desperate poverty.

**Thank you, friends.**

Marcy Seitel [marcyseitel@yahoo.com](mailto:marcyseitel@yahoo.com)

**- appreciation! We would like to thank our friends at the Bayou Bakery.**

As part of the County celebrations of suffrage many restaurants had bake sales from vintage recipes. Bayou raised \$104 and they designated that money to come to us. We are very appreciative of their generosity.

This is a very rough time for many many businesses including local restaurants so **if you do venture out or want to pick up some takeout please remember our friends at Bayou they are at 1515 North Courthouse Rd.**

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**That was some legislative session.** We had many successes, some nail biters and some bills that just didn't go far enough, fast enough for us! **I can't tell you how much I appreciate** the level of commitment so many members exhibited. You went to Richmond, you made phone calls, you went to town halls, tweeted, Facebooked, sent letters... it was dizzying as well as both gratifying and humbling. There is no doubt, the LWV Arlington was a force!

If I had the words to express the depths of my gratitude, I would be in another

profession but **please know how deeply proud I am to be the President of this funny, dedicated and amazing group of people.**

Now, you know I can't disappoint you! I have to say this, or I know you would be disappointed. **Please fill out** the advocacy challenge form! **We must win** that \$600. Oh, come on, you saw that coming down the road, didn't you? :)

[Log your advocacy here](#)

Look for an article written by **Joan** and **Julia Tanner** in the next issue of **LWVVA VOTER**. It will detail all the changes to the voting laws- including the removal of the ridiculous excuse-based early voting rules in Virginia!

## **LWV US National Day of Action Results**

LWV US held our first "Women Power the Vote" Day of Action this year. They encouraged all Leagues to participate. Arlington held our own legislative day of action which was highly successful. Here are some national statistics on the overall success of the Day of Action:

**339 Leagues participated in 396 events** in all 50 states, DC, VI and Hong Kong. These events **touched 130,000 people** who received information on fair maps, were registered to vote or helped with the Census, etc.

## LWV US CONVENTION

Calling all Volunteers!

### **2020 LWVUS 100th Anniversary National Convention**

The LWVUS Convention will be in Washington, **June 25-June 28**, 2020 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Avenue, NW. It marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the League of Women Voters. Approximately 1000 members of the LWV are expected to attend.

This is a follow up reminder that the Volunteer Recruitment Chairs are **still looking for volunteers** to help at our LWVUS Convention.

When the LWVUS Convention is held in Washington, League members from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia are called on to volunteer to help with many tasks including registration, hospitality, plenary, etc.

#### **Everyone who volunteers will receive:**

\*\*One ticket to the Capitol Steps performance June 26

\*\*\$10 transportation stipend (hotel is convenient to Union Station metro)

\*\*Opportunity to sit in on any official session(s), hear the debates, and prominent speakers

\*\*Take pride along with one thousand colleagues from around the nation in our 100 years of empowering the vote

Sign Up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094caaa828a0fb6-100th>

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## EVENTS

**Our Post Legislative Forum** has been canceled. **Please email the questions** you would have asked our delegates to us at [LWVArlingtonVA@gmail.com](mailto:LWVArlingtonVA@gmail.com). Our coordinator, **Seema Jain**, is making arrangements with them to do some form of videoconference to get your answers.

### **April 2 - OAR Breakfast canceled**

Due to the latest public health and safety concerns regarding the COVID-19 outbreak, OAR (Offender Aid and Restoration) Arlington has decided to temporarily suspend in-person activities until the end of April. At the time of this newsletter publication, **OAR is considering live-streaming the annual fundraiser breakfast scheduled for Thursday 2 April.** A final decision will be made very shortly regarding the status of the breakfast. **Please check the LWV Arlington website and Facebook pages** in the coming days for up-to-the-minute details. When a final decision has been made, LWV Arlington and **Pam Berg** (LWV Table Captain) will notify you of status.

**April 26, 2020**



## **LWV Candid-ating Forum Run by LWV VA Students**

1:30 PM

Washington Liberty High School Cafeteria

So far, this is still on!

Join us at the Cafeteria of Washington Liberty High School on **April 26** for a forum to **meet candidates for school and county board** running in the June 9 primary. Like our last highly successful forum, **this will be an informal candid-ating forum** where you will be able to ask candidates questions directly.

We are excited that **this will be a student-led forum.** Please join us!

[RSVP here](#)

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## **Centennial Corner – March 2020**

**Centennial Corner** is a regular feature of the **League in Action** e-newsletter to celebrate *three centennial anniversaries in 2020*: the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the creation of the League of Women Voters, and the naming of our county as Arlington County. Centennial Corner will:

- Highlight important **moments and leaders** in these three histories;
- List **upcoming events** relevant to the anniversaries; and

- Flag suggestions for additional **reading and other resources**.

The Arlington League's **Centennial Committee** is proud to produce this feature and would welcome your feedback and suggestions for future content. Please send ideas to **Seema Jain** ([seema.kakad@gmail.com](mailto:seema.kakad@gmail.com)).

### **The League of *Women* Voters?**

The League has always been an organization ahead of its time. As early as 1921, founder **Carrie Chapman Catt** supported a "strong and urgent invitation...to independent-minded men to become members and unite in an independent political policy for the Nation." Noting that one of the major political parties was quickly founding a Women's Club, Catt asked, "Why not step boldly to the front and do away with sex segregation and beat the political women in a race of progress?" She observed that "the country is full of independent-minded men who are 'all dressed up' with independent ambitions and 'have no place to go.'"

**Throughout the years, the League considered proposals to include men as full voting members. This finally happened by a 2-to-1 vote at the 1974 biennial Convention.** The move made the front page of *The New York Times*. Since then, there have been periodic proposals to drop "Women" from the League's name to reflect the organization's gender-diverse membership. A renamed "League of Voters" might be more accurate but would risk squandering the considerable benefits and authority that come from having a recognizable brand developed through a century of civic work.

Sources: Document 8: Carrie Chapman Catt Calls for Men as Members, drawn from

"Letter from Carrie Chapman Catt to Edna Gelhorn, Marie Edwards, Elizabeth Hauser, February 17, 1921, LWV Papers on film, III. A.3. 0456, reproduced in Barbara Stuhler, *For the Public Record* (Pogo Press, 2003), 40; Lacey Fosburgh, "League of Women Voters Votes to Let Men Join It," *New York Times*, May 8, 1974, p. A1.

## **Events**

### **Arlington County Government Network for Women Leaders (WOW)**

#### **Women's History Month Proclamation Ceremony**

**March 31, County Board Room, Bozman Government Center, Noon**

(No word on status of this event at this time.)

**Kathrine Switzer**, the first woman to run the Boston Marathon in 1967, will be the keynote speaker for Arlington County's Women's History Month Proclamation Ceremony which takes place on Thursday, March 31 at noon. Ms. Switzer will share her personal story of being the first woman to run the Boston Marathon and talk about her advocacy for women in sports. Switzer is the founder of 261 Fearless Inc., a global non-profit organization created to empower and unite women through the creation of local non-competitive running clubs, education programs, communication platforms and social running events.

### **Women's History Month Exhibit**

**Month of March, Central Library - CANCELED**

(Central Library will be closed for the immediate future.)

Throughout Arlington's history, women have been groundbreakers and trailblazers, important forces working for better education, libraries, and conservation. Women

helped found Arlington's first hospital, and they fought for civil rights. Their contributions to the growth and development of their community were immense, and Arlington today would not be the same without them. An exhibit, "Women's Work: Then and Now," will feature profiles of historic and contemporary women whose contributions have influenced the Arlington community. The exhibit will draw from the Center for Local History's "Women's Work" project to include profiles of trailblazers such as **Margarite Syphax**, **Gertrude Crocker** and **Carrie Johnson** and will feature profiles of contemporary women, including past Women of Vision Award Winners and nominees from partner organizations. League members **Nancy Tate** and **Seema Jain** are among the women included.

### **It's Arlington's Centennial, Too**

#### **100th Birthday Celebration for Arlington County March 16 ceremony CANCELED**

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the naming of Arlington County. The year-long celebration will feature author events, activities and panel discussion with the theme: "Looking Both Ways: Arlington at 100, a Century of Progress." The evening of March 16, the County Board will host an actual "birthday" celebration with cake and remarks by Board Members. March 16, 1920, is the date the name "Arlington" was changed from Alexandria County through an act of the General Assembly.

The County has launched a [webpage](#) to showcase news of the County's "naming centennial" and associated events. Be sure to sign up for email updates.

Meanwhile, check out this "[story map](#)" from 1920, courtesy of the Arlington

Historical Society.

## **Exhibits**

The following federal museums have women's suffrage exhibits, but many of these are currently closed due to the coronavirus.

National Archives

National Museum of American History (new exhibit)

Library of Congress

Capitol Visitors Center

There is also a small new exhibit on the 12<sup>th</sup> floor of the Madison Hotel. (No word at this time on the status of this exhibit)

## **Resources**

Twitter users are getting ready to share thoughts and information on the suffrage centennial. Here are some accounts to follow. (We will add more as we learn of them.)

@WomenVote 100

@DailySuffragist

@WomensVote100

@SuffCentennials

@2020centennial

@Suff\_Postcards

@CentOfSuffrage

@AlicePaulInstit

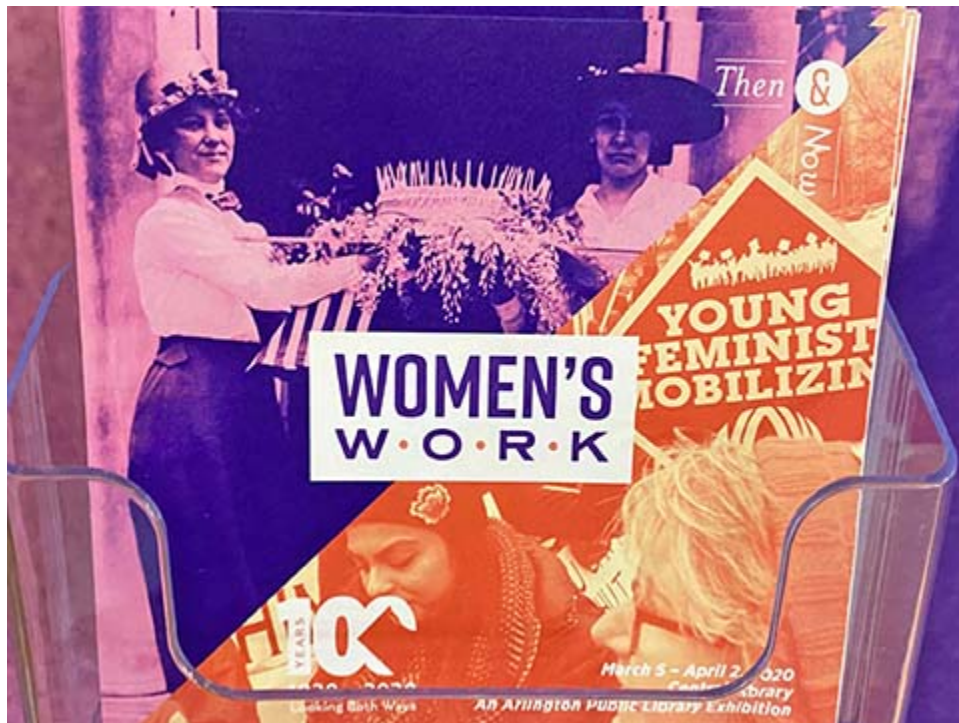
@100thSuffrageDC

@INSuffrage100

@Suffragist

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**Arlington Library Exhibit "Women's Work" highlights Contributions of Women Leaders in Arlington History including the work of Past and Current LWV-Arl Members**



Arlington Central Library is now closed for the immediate future. The exhibit may be extended.

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March 5 Reception marking the opening of the "Women's Work" exhibit where two of our members **Nancy Tate** and **Seema Jain** were honored



## SEEMA JAIN

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*Nominated by the League of Women Voters of Arlington*

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**Seema Jain** has long been a prolific and active member of the Arlington community, particularly through her work with the League of Women Voters of Arlington, of which she has been a member since 2014.

Jain has been a member of the League's board of directors since 2015 and has served as the group's archivist and secretary for much of that time. She is a member of the organization's Centennial Committee, contributing to research on both Arlington and the League, and has also organized multiple pre- and post-legislative forums for the public.

Jain also participates yearly in the League's high school voter registration and education efforts. Outside of her contributions to the League, Jain works at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.







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