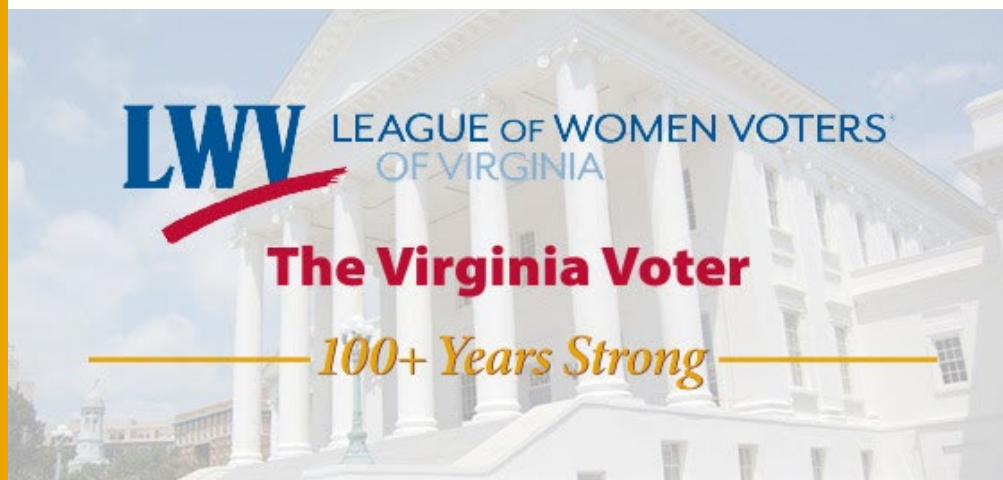


ons@lww-va.org>

Oct 1, 2023,
8:21 AM

to me



Message from the President

Full Court Press Month

Joan Porte, President, LWW-VA

Happy October – or as we at the League know it as “full court press month.” We are well into early voting and hitting the deadline of when we can do voter registration (Oct. 16). At least the weather is getting cooler - I hope!

Speaking of elections, we are part of a Commonwealth-wide election protection coalition in which participants are trained to watch for and report problems at the polls such as people being told they can't vote or if an elderly or disabled person is being denied curbside voting, etc. To sign up go here <https://www.protectthevoteva.org/lww>.

Janet Boyd our Voter Services chair has some more information for you below – especially on addressing the issue of “same day voter registration” and how to approach it with voters. The trick is to make sure they know about it but not deter people from registering the “regular way” which does not require them to file a provisional ballot.

Thanks to Presidents and designees who met with our two Federal Senators, Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, as part of the LWW US program to set up Congressional meetings during the August recess. I hope a lot of local leagues were able to meet their member(s) of the US House of Representatives.

Also, be sure to check out our Banned Book Week Video which will be used by the Virginia Library Association and us to promote voting! The theme of BBW is “Let Freedom Read” and the correlation with freedom and voting was easy. We

have so many “stars” in this video – thank you all for taking the time to encourage reading, learning, freedom, and voting!

By the way, October 8, 1993 was the day that one oft-challenged author, the brilliant Toni Morrison, became the first Black woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Also, October 11, 1884 was the birthday of the only First Lady to be a member of the League, Eleanor Roosevelt. Since I am on a roll, here is one more for you, October 9, 1830 was the birthday of Belva Lockwood, the first woman admitted to bar of the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1884, still not able to vote, she mounted a full-fledged campaign to be President!

Whatever your day brings – take time to have a fall beverage and jump in a pile of leaves – why should kids have all the fun?

Thanks for all you do.

- Joan

Leaning Into Social Media

- Candi Bradshaw, LWV-Va Social Media Strategist

Virginia is now heading full swing into election season and our 14 Local Leagues have our work cut out for us. Joan Porte has asked me to coordinate with local leagues to strengthen and increase social media messaging in the run up to the November 7 election.

Social media is a vital lifeline for the League to advocate our positions and call voters to action. Social media is one place where we can use our bullhorn to address the citizens of Virginia. Frequency of posting is critically important. Appeals to our youth, both GenZ and millennials are essential. The urgent matter of getting the public registered to vote and informed about voting options is top priority.

I would like to put together a Social Media Committee that will meet via zoom every first Friday of each month. We will discuss the social media calendar and exchange ideas on how to increase all of the leagues’ social media presence.

Candi Bradshaw
socialmedia@lww-va.org
LWV-VA Social Media Strategist

Voter Information

Same Day Voter Registration

- Janet Boyd, Voter Service Chair

Virginia has “same day voter registration” which allows you to vote and register at the same time.

During Early Voting: Between October 17 and November 4, 2023, go to your local registrar’s office or any early voting site. These can be found at <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup> by using the dropdown box to find your local city/county.

On Election Day, November 7: go to your own voting site, which you can find at our nonpartisan voting information website <https://www.vote411.org/>. Bring one of the forms of Identification needed to vote in Virginia which can be found here: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/voterid/>. Once there, you will be allowed to register to vote and file a provisional ballot. You must register and vote at the same time. Provisional ballots are used by voters who do not appear on the list of registered voters at their polling location. Provisional ballots are approved by your local elections board once they are assured that you are eligible to vote and have only cast one ballot. You will receive notice of when the Board will review your ballot, you may attend but are not required to. You will receive written notice if your ballot is rejected.

For questions on this contact your local registrar.

If you feel someone is trying to stop you from voting, contact this non-partisan **Election Protection Hotline 866-OUR-VOTE 866-687-8683**. ***THIS IS AVAILABLE IN SEVERAL LANGUAGES.***



Confessions From the Voting Booth

ISSUE DRIVEN,
PARTY BLIND.

We Have a Podcast!

The League of Women Voters of Virginia Presents: **Confessions From The Voting Booth Podcast**

With a League that takes pride for being Issue Driven and Party Blind; every month Denise Harrington (LWV-VA, State Advocacy) and Candi Bradshaw (LWV-VA, State Social Media) are teaming up to talk about the top priorities on the voting list that need to be acknowledged by our government and state candidates. It's time to hold them accountable.

Podcast

Link: <https://open.spotify.com/show/7zazIL4QFjtvr5wf4eiVx?si=73bfd2d2d5d54bd9>

Click the link and check us out! We are here to engage with you all! Send us your voice messages and questions and we will read them on air! Don't forget to Like/Share/Subscribe and be sure to click the notification bell so you know when a new episode is out!

I'M WITH THE BANNED



Banned Books Week Oct 1 -7. 2023

- *Nan Carmack, President-Elect, Virginia Library Association*

Banned Books Week serves not only to celebrate literature that disrupts comfortable thinking but also the very first idea that the founders of the United States of America added to our Constitution: The First Amendment. In asserting the freedom of speech to every person, our founders held sacred the notion that no one should be prevented from expressing or consuming ideas that others may find objectionable. Books that fall on the lists of banned or challenged books demonstrate the attempt by some to silence an author from expressing their ideas, their lived experience, their imagination. Bans and challenges also attempt to thwart the freedom of readers to explore the same ideas, experiences, and imaginings.

Dr. Rudine Bishop Simms, professor emeritus at Ohio State University, wrote a famed essay in which she likens books to "mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors." These analogies demonstrate how literature can provide the reader with a reflection of themselves, a window into which they can view the experience of

another, and very special books that allow us to step into another world entirely. In doing so, books have the power to help folks grow their capacity for empathy, understanding, and compassion.

This week, we celebrate not only the value of literature that challenge our own experiences, but the American ideal of the freedom of speech, in which no one person or entity can tell us what we can and cannot read. This week, we celebrate the League of Women Voters standing up for the Freedom to Read. Which book will you choose to read in celebration?

356 unique book titles were challenged across Virginia in the first 8 months of 2023, according to the American Library Association. That's nearly twice the 182 titles that came under fire in the state in 2022, which was double the previous year's number.

Banned Books Video

Joan Porte, President, LWV-VA

The League delivered 350 "vote" fliers to the Virginia Library Association for use during "Banned Book Week" Oct 1 - 7 and our members made this amazing video that will be used by us and the Association during Banned Book Week! Thank you to everyone who contributed! Banned Book Week starts today, October 1 and runs through Oct 7. This is the long version which will be on Youtube - and we have six 2 minute pieces that will be boosted through social media by us and the Virginia Library Association. The theme this year is "Let Freedom Read"

Check it out [here!](#)

Mis & Dis

*- Nick Gothard
Virginia Civic Engagement Table*

Join the nonpartisan Election Protection effort in Virginia! Volunteer to be a social media monitor and help keep an eye out for **mis**information and **dis**information from your home! Complete the [interest form](#) to get notified about upcoming training opportunities.

Mattaponi Citizens for Change

- Gloria Custalow

A few years ago, LWV Virginia heard from Gloria Custalow a member of the Mattaponi People and the fight to allow women to vote in Mattaponi tribal elections. During this Indigenous People Month, we have asked Ms. Custalow to update us.

Thank you League of Women Voters for inviting me to provide updates on the plight of the Mattaponi People. Since I last spoke with you, the Mattaponi Citizens for Change recruited a Virginia election official to oversee and certify the Mattaponi Tribal election result held on March 26, 2022. This election was open to all Mattaponi members regardless of gender or residency. At that time, the first Mattaponi Tribal constitution was ratified ensuring the rights of all tribal members and included anti-discrimination protections and due process for members. With gratitude, I was elected Assistant Chief and several other Mattaponi women were elected to council seats. Finally, equality for ALL members was protected by tribal law in this historic election.

Unfortunately, nearly a year and a half after the certified election, the self-appointed tribal government held their own first-time election in over 40 years on July 22, 2023. Their "approved" voter member list consisted of 24 members of their family, not the entire Tribe. Sadly, the Commonwealth of Virginia continues to acknowledge them and NOT the tribal government elected March 26, 2022. The Mattaponi Nation consists of hundreds of people who reject the assertion that only a few select members have any rights.

The fight continues and we continue to ask the Governor to honor the tribal leaders duly elected by the entire Tribe, including women. We appreciate any assistance in our quest to be recognized.

Pre Session is December 6, 2023

Mark your calendars and RSVP now for our 2023 Pre Session which will be a virtual event. Pre Session is when we bring in our partner organizations to have them present their legislative priorities for the 2024 General Assembly Session. Invited guests include:

- Susan Beals, Commissioner, Virginia Department of Elections
- Stephen E. Cummings, Secretary of Finance, Commonwealth of Virginia
- Narissa S. Rahaman Executive Director, Equality VA
- James W "Jay" Speer, Executive Director, Virginia Poverty Law Center

There will be more than 20 partners in attendance.

We will continue to update you when we get a full agenda. Secure your spot today: RSVP [here](#)

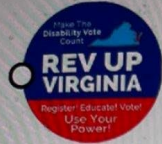
Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Grace Lawler (she/her)
LWV-VA Domestic Violence Issue Group Chair
LWV-VA Reproductive Health Issue Group Chair

According to an article from the National Library of Medicine (2022), “as many as one in four women and one in nine men experience family and domestic violence” annually. With October being **Domestic Violence Awareness Month**, please consider using this link to donate to a domestic violence shelter in Virginia: <https://www.domesticshelters.org/fundraisers/wish-lists>

Using this link, you can find wish lists for shelters in your area, and purchase items through the website that will be sent directly to the shelter. You can also explore other donation options by clicking on the “donate” tab.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the League of Women Voters of Virginia (LWV-VA) Domestic Violence Issue Group to donate your time and help advocate for those who are experiencing domestic violence in the commonwealth, please send me an email at lawlergrace07@gmail.com. If you believe you, or someone you care about, may be in an emotionally or physically unhealthy relationship, please call Virginia's 24-hour Family Violence and Sexual Assault hotline at **1-800-838-8238** or visit this link for other contact options <https://vsdvalliance.org/get-help-ayuda/hotlines/>. You deserve to live a safe and happy life where you feel respected and cared for.



Calling all Virginians with disabilities & allies!
Your presence will make a difference. Come!



PRESS CONFERENCE

showcasing the

★ POWER OF THE ★ DISABILITY VOTE

Wednesday, October 4th, 2023

11AM start (arrive at 10:30)

Bell Tower - 101 N. 9th Street, Richmond

Drop off on 9th St. or Enter parking garages
at St. Paul's Church or Edison Garage from 8th St, \$5/hr.



Presented by REV UP Virginia (Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!)
in partnership with

6 Wheels Consulting, American Parkinson Disease Association, Brain Injury Association of Virginia, disAbility Law Center of Virginia, League of Women Voters, Partnership for People with Disabilities, Resources for Independent Living, Sportable, The Arc of Virginia, United Methodist Church Commission on Disabilities, United Spinal Association, Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, Virginia Centers for Independent Living, Virginia Down Syndrome Association, Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy, VOICE



Focus

Report Back

Last month, we told you about our partner organization--**RevUp!**--and their work promoting voter rights for people with disabilities. Co-chair Helena Berger had her editorial featured in the Virginia Mercury during Disability Voting Rights Week. You can read her words [here](#). And if you're going to be in the Richmond area on October 4th, check out the event, [above](#).

And remember when we said that the LWV-Williamsburg folks were planning to show "The Janes"? That's a film about a group of women who built a clandestine network in

Chicago to help women seeking safe, affordable, illegal abortions between 1968 and the landmark Supreme Court Case Roe v. Wade. Last month, the League put out the call to come watch. This is what the audience looked like ([below](#)). Well done, Leaguers!



RCV--A better way to vote?

Ranked Choice Voting

- Chris DeRosa, LWV-Arlington and Alexandria City

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a different way of marking your ballot. Instead of choosing just one candidate, you are asked to rank the candidates on your ballot (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc). The winning candidate must reach an established threshold (50% + 1 for one seat; 33% + 1 for two seats) before being declared the winning candidate.

RCV ensures that winning candidates have the support of the "majority" of voters, rather than a plurality of 22 or 23%. RCV eliminates the "spoiler effect", attracts more diverse candidates, and results in campaigns that are more "civil" and less negative.

In 2020, the General Assembly approved the use of RCV in local county board and city council elections (HB 1103). Legislation to expand the use of RCV to Constitutional officers, School Boards, and other elections did not pass in 2022 or 2023.

In the fall of 2022, the City of Richmond decided NOT to use RCV in their City Council elections. But, a city charter revision committee is recommending changes that include RCV use for the mayoral election.

In June 2023, Arlington County became the first jurisdiction in Virginia to use RCV in its County Board primary election. Six candidates were on the ballot, vying for two seats on the Board. Two winning candidates were determined after five (5) "rounds" of tabulation. Together, the two candidates earned the support of more than 2/3 of the voters.

The Arlington County Board decided not to use RCV again in the November 2023 General Election, but may consider its use in County Board elections in 2024 and beyond.

Other jurisdictions, including Albemarle County, Charlottesville, Norfolk, Fredericksburg have begun conversations about using RCV in their local governing body elections. Local Leagues are encouraged to participate in these discussions and voice their support of RCV in local elections.

If you would like to join a Ranked Choice Voting interest group, please contact Chris DeRosa (Arlington/Alexandria City) (chris.lwv.222@gmail.com). She and Jane Newell (Richmond Area) are happy to share more information via a virtual meeting.

The League of Women Voters of Virginia supports RCV – you can view the LWV-VA position in Part E of this report: <https://lwv-va.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FINAL-Revised-Election-Position-Part-2-Report-2021-0221.pdf>

NOTE: *in response to the very negative opinion page article against Ranked Choice Voting, in the "Richmond Times Dispatch," the League and our partners penned this response which also appeared on the opinion page and was picked up by the "Bristol Herald."*

In switch to ranked choice voting, Arlington got it right

JOANPORTE, LIZ WHITE, BOHARIION, JANICE MORRIS ANDMICHAEL CANTWELL

In his recent op-ed, "Arlington abandoned ranked choice voting, which is a good thing:" Trent England said that Arlington "abandoned ranked choice voting" - never mind the fact that a majority of County Board members clearly stated they want to use RCV again in the future, and 70% of Arlingtonians said they supported it in a recent survey. Mr. England represents a dark-money political group based in Oklahoma, so it's understandable how he got facts wrong about our elections (the primary was in June, not May, for example). We represent several grassroots organizations that have been on the ground in Arlington, and are happy to provide clarity.

It's first important to note that when the Arlington board members unanimously passed the RCV pilot program, it was specifically for the June primary. They never indicated it would also be used in November's general election, but that doesn't mean it won't be revisited in the future.

In fact, the opposite appears to be true. When speaking about RCV in July, Board Chair Chris tian Dorsey said, "I absolutely think it's important for the County Board to do this again!" His colleague Matt de Ferranti agreed, saying, "I am fully supportive of moving in this direction:

Another board member, Takis Karantonis, even said he "can't imagine a different way to do a Democratic primary again after this!" This doesn't sound like a cow1ty ready to "abandon" RCV. In the end, RCV did what was promised: It reflected the will of as many Arlingtonians as possible. Eighty-four percent of voters cast a ballot for a winning candidate, up from 45% in the last comparable two-candidate primary.

The facts are clear: When voters use RCV, they like it and want to use it again. In the past decade, data indicates that a majority of voters in Alaska, New York, Maine, Minnesota and Utah prefer RCV to single-choice elections.

In Virginia, the state Republican Party used RCV to nominate its 2021 statewide candidates, and expanded on this success with four congressional primaries in 2022 and 2023. Put simply, Mr. England was wrong about the Arlington County Board's recent RCV vote, wrong about voter sentiment about RCV and wrong about the future of RCV in Virginia. His facts were, to borrow his own **expression, as "clear as mud!"**

Joan Porte is president of the League of women voters of Virginia, Liz White is executive director of UpVote Virginia, Bo Harmon is a campaign adviser for Represent Us, Janice Morris is a member of UUCA's Up the Vote and Michael Cantwell is state lead for the Veterans for Political innovation.



411

ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

Know Before You Go

Are you in the same voting district as before?

Early voting begins on September 22nd!

Before you head to the polls, be sure you know which State Senate and House districts you now live in. Special masters drew new maps in December 2021. Districts have been renumbered – almost all of us are in districts with different number(s) and/or boundaries.

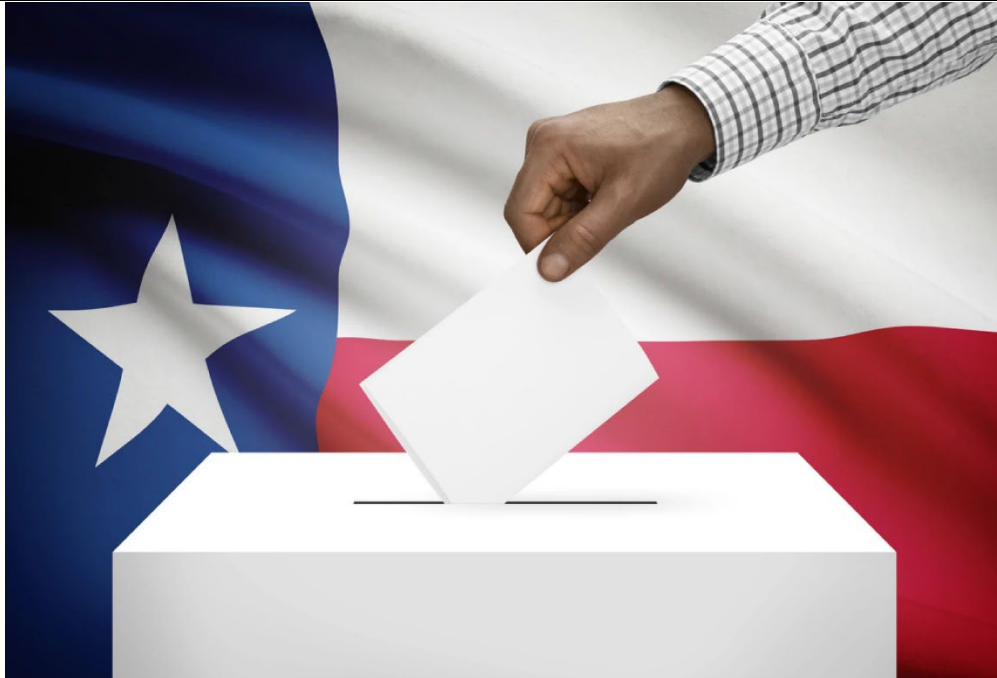
Check your district assignments and find out who will be on your ballots. The candidates on your ballot may be different.

Here are two easy-to-use websites that can help you ::

Simply enter your home address to find out what your districts are:

Virginia Public Access project: <https://www.vpap.org/redistricting/>

League of Women Voters : Vote 411: <https://www.vote411.org/>



Jail/Restoration Rights

Dear Virginia Department of Corrections...

Our **Vote from Jail/Restoration Task Force** is hard at work. This is our non-advocacy Task Force that is working 'hands on' with returning citizens and re-entry councils. We learned of a recent directive of the Va Department of Corrections that sends inmate mail to Memphis for copying and destruction. This can impede absentee ballot receipt for prisoners who have non-felony charges. To date, this letter and a follow up have not been answered but they will keep at it.

Anyone interested in working on this Task Force can sign up here! <https://forms.gle/qBz5RqCcgbiFMbjt9>

Here's the letter:

Virginia Department of Corrections
Centralized Mail Distribution Center
Via email cmdcinquiries@vadoc.virginia.gov

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am requesting clarification of the directive of April 26, 2022, announcing the New Centralized Mail Distribution Center effective July 1, 2022. This stated that July 1, 2022, any attorney, court or non-attorney/court entity wishing to send legal correspondence to an inmate or CCAP (Community Corrections Alternative Program) probationer/parolee must send such correspondence

directly to the VADOC's Centralized Mail Distribution Center, at this mailing address:

VADOC Centralized Mail Distribution Center
Inmate Name, Inmate #
3521 Woods Way
State Farm, Virginia 23160

All other mail I believe is sent to Memphis to be scanned, destroyed and a digital copy made available to the inmate. Therefore, any ballots or election-related materials sent to inmates from their local or State Department of Elections would also be sent to Memphis. This would render the ballots unusable as voting must be done on the original form and returned in the envelope (s) provided by the Department of Elections.

Because incarcerated persons in Virginia who have not been convicted of a felony are eligible to vote, the League of Women Voters of Virginia is asking for this directive to be clarified and expanded to include "any attorney, court or non-attorney/court entity and official mail sent by local and/or state offices of elections..."

In addition, this expanded information must be sent to local departments of correction to assure that they follow the same procedure.

It is vital that all eligible citizens be granted the right to vote, and all efforts are made to ensure the proper flow of information and materials to not impede this Constitutionally protected right.

I appreciate your time in this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Joan Porte
President, LWV-VA



Focus on Local League

LWV-Montgomery County

Gunin Kiran, LWV-MC President

The League of Women Voters of Montgomery County (LWV-MC) organized in 1971. Since then, it has been actively involved in educating and registering voters.

The LWV-MC co-sponsors two events with the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech. The Community Forum in the fall focuses on issues of democracy. In the spring, we co-sponsor Great Decisions, which is provided by the Foreign Policy Association.

This fall's Community Forum is on ranked choice voting. Our speakers are Liz White, Executive Director of UpVote Virginia, and Dr. Caitlin Jewitt, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech. UpVote Virginia is a nonpartisan democracy reform collective. It is dedicated to improving the structure of our electoral system to better reflect the will of voters. Dr. Jewitt's research focus includes campaigns and elections, public opinion, political parties, and presidential primaries and caucuses.

This presentation will explore the option of ranked choice voting (RCV), an electoral method that is gaining momentum in the United States and in Virginia. With RCV, voters rank all candidates in an election rather than choosing one. The benefits of this method include better representation of voters' viewpoints and more collegial campaigning.

The Community Forum will be on **Wednesday, Oct. 4th , at 7:00 p.m.** in the Blacksburg Town Council Chambers and is free to all participants.

This fall is an important election year in our area both locally and statewide. In addition to this program, The LWV-MC with the Montgomery County-Radford City-Floyd County Branch of the NAACP is co-sponsoring multiple forums for candidates for the state House and Senate as well for local races for the Board of Supervisors, School Board, two Town Councils and Constitutional Officers. The LWV-MC also hosts monthly First Tuesday Talks to inform our members and the community on various topics. The topics in the past ranged from gerrymandering to voting rights; from redistricting to recap of General Assembly sessions.

Important Dates in October 2023

Sept 22 - First day of In-Person Early Voting

Oct 1- 7 – Banned Book Week

Oct 9 – Indigenous People Day

Oct 16 – “Regular” voter registration deadline (Last day to register to vote or update existing registration)

Oct 17 - Same day registration begins and runs until Election

Oct 26 – Vote Early Day

5pm, October 27, 2023 - Last day to apply for a mail ballot

Mail Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before November 7, 2023 and received by 12pm November 13, 2023



[Click Here to Support the Work of the League of Women Voters of Virginia](#)

Copyright © 2023 League of Women Voters of Virginia, All rights reserved.

You are receiving these email notices because you have signed up for membership in the League or asked to receive information from the League.

The League of Women Voters was founded in 1920 when U.S. women won the right to vote.

We work to encourage informed and active participation in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. The League is dedicated to empowering voters and defending democracy. We are proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

For more information, visit the League of Women Voters of Virginia at lww-va.org and on social media [@lwwva](#) and [@leagueofwomenvoters](#).

Our mailing address:

League of Women Voters of Virginia

1011 E. Main Street

Suite 214A

Richmond, VA 23219

[Add us to your address book](#)

[Update your email address here](#). This must be the same email address as you have on file with your local League.

Would you like to change how you receive these emails?

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