

March 2026 "eVoter"

March is Women's History Month

As we celebrate the 80th anniversary of our League's first meeting, please take time to reflect on all that was accomplished during that first year under the leadership of Mary Stamps White. The activities and priorities of that time closely mirror the work we continue today.

Thank you, Mary, for your initiative and drive.



On March 14, 1946, Mary Stamps White brought together 29 other women for the first organizational meeting of the League of Women Voters of Albemarle, calling for community action from our League. She had foresight and used her organizing skills to bring change to our area and pave the way for our League to become involved in local politics through educational budget-awareness campaigns, appeals to help the needy, voter services such as Board of Supervisors candidate meetings, and the wise use of print and media, community partnerships, postcards, and flyer campaigns available at that time.

Five areas of focus were established, and committees were formed under her leadership. She began a campaign supporting the rationing of fats and oils to help relieve famine abroad, starting with 2,000 flyers entitled "Hunger" that were stuffed into grocery bags. A short film showing the dire situation was presented, and students created posters to help make the campaign a success.

Next, she organized a study project titled "Know Your Town and County," which resulted in pamphlets on City-County Planning, Health, Education, Recreation, and Housing. These pamphlets were used for

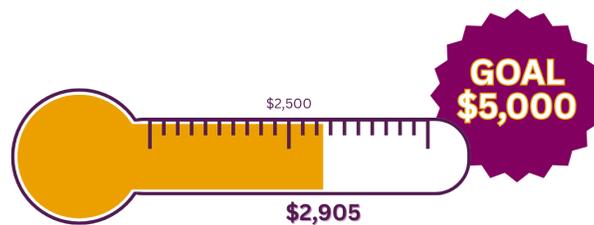
community broadcasts on WCHV radio. From these broadcasts, a full-scale debate was held on city and county budgets.

She then alerted citizens to the serious implications of atomic energy, during which the League sponsored sermons in local churches, demonstrating early community partnerships in our League's history. She worked with the newly formed Voter Services Committee to inform citizens about a bond issue for a new high school whose bona fides were questionable. This effort led the League to conduct careful study to ensure that educational needs and budgets were thoroughly researched, clear, and understandable.

Under her leadership in 1947, Voter Services published information on voting requirements and sent out 900 postcards to non-registered poll-tax payers to promote the first Board of Supervisors candidate meeting. That year, the League mailed 3,500 questionnaires and 8,000 additional flyers for the Board of Supervisors race. Their concerns still resonate today: higher teacher pay and support for children with special needs. Another issue that continues to resonate is taking a deep dive into practical and concrete steps for international cooperation among countries of the world.

Her organization and the techniques she used are still in practice today. Although technology and communication have greatly improved since the 1940s, our methods remain much the same. We owe a great deal to Mary Stamps White, who left our League when she moved to Lynchburg the following year, where she became a strong leader in the Lynchburg League.

Fund Drive Wraps Up This Month



So far, we have raised **\$2,905**. Our goal is **\$5,000!** The campaign will continue through the end of this month.

Please give what you can. With rising costs, our League depends more than ever on fundraising to keep up with expenses. Your entire donation stays with and supports our local League.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed so far—it truly means a great deal.

Save the Dates

Upcoming Events

March 4 & 11, 2026

Women's Legislative Round Table

WLRT ends this month. Find out more about the final sessions [here!](#)

If you aren't able to attend a session, you can still sign up for it and a recording of the event will be sent to you.

[Register for WLRT Sessions Here](#)

March 11, 2026

New Member Meeting

7:00-8:00pm

Our president and Membership Chair will meet with new members to discuss upcoming elections and how we, in the league, participate. We'll also discuss our event at the Tom Tom Festival with the theme of courage.

All members are invited to attend. For those interested please send an email to president@lwv-cva.org for the link. Emails with zoom link will be sent to new members.

March 28, 2026

No Kings Rally

1:00pm-2:30pm

Hwy 29 between Hydraulic Rd. and Greenbriar Dr.

We will be participating and making our voices heard as we stand up against authoritarianism. We'll be along the route with our sign held high and invite you to join us if you're able. If you have an LWV T-shirt or button, please wear it.

March 31, 2026

Virginia Women's Foundation's Women's History Month Celebration

5:30pm

Northside Library

Our League will cosponsor **Virginia Women's Foundation's Women's History Month Celebration**. This event features a panel discussion designed to honor and uplift stories of women's leadership.

April 25, 2026

Tom Tom Festival

February in Review



League Helps Girl Scouts Learn About Civics February 8, 2026

Lisa Hilgartner, at St. Paul's Church in Ivy worked with GS Troop 8125, a troop with four high school students, one middle schooler and a 5th grader, who were interested in how they could help with the voting process. We discussed reasons for voting, who can vote, and why it's important to urge eligible voters to go to the polls to vote stressing each vote matters. We will be working with the troop as election season begins to get them in the action.



League Day February 11, 2026

Our League Members Lisa Hilgartner, Stephanie Lowenhaupt, Kobby Hoffmann, and Elisabeth MacNamara got a chance to talk with Del. Laufer on Tuesday evening before League Day at the opening soiree. We were joined by Miriam Fleitmann and Meg Heubeck at Wednesday's breakfast meeting, where we listened to speakers on National Popular Vote, Women's Health and Reproductive Rights and on Felons Restoration of Rights. The Staunton Augusta Waynesboro League, whose members: Evette Barton, Andrea Davis, and Donna Yobs were recognized as a new league. At noon the League of Women Voters of Virginia and 14 local leagues were recognized on the floor of the General Assembly for the political work we do. We then visited all our state senators and delegates offices and spoke to their staff leaving a packet of legislative stances we have and our reasoning for them. If you did not make it down this year, we encourage you to consider attending next year - it is a worthwhile experience!



80th Anniversary Party at Eastwood February 22, 2026

Despite the wind, cold, and sleet many members, former LWV-CVA presidents, and donors came together at Eastwood Winery to celebrate LWV-CVA's 80th anniversary. We shared, cake, a trivia game, conversation and a lot of laughter remembering times gone by and welcoming new folks. Those present were Carolyn Fitzpatrick and Lisa Hilgartner (organizers of the event), Kim Harris, Gwedette Crummie, Carol Cutler, Kristin Breen, Miriam Fleitmann, Kerin Yates, Sally Thomas, Liz Palmer, Susan Mark, Pat Cochran, Sue Friedman, Anne Claar, Susan Roberts, Madeleine Brann, Charlotte Gibson, Barbara and Roger Williams, Frances Schutz and Beth Kariel.

Committee News

Voter Services Committee by Kim Harris

There is a tremendous amount happening in Voter Services right now! We're deep into both short- and long-term planning for 2026 — from special elections and primary date changes to preparing for our nation's 250th anniversary. It's an exciting and pivotal time to be engaged.

If you'd like a voice in shaping what's ahead, please join us at our monthly meetings. We truly welcome your ideas and your energy.

Advocacy Alerts: Why You're Hearing From Us

You may have noticed I haven't duplicated alerts already sent by Joan Porte, our State League President. I'm trying to be mindful of inbox volume — but please know that every alert reflects important legislation moving right now.

If you receive one, I strongly encourage you to contact your representatives. Your voice absolutely matters. The volume isn't accidental — it reflects how much is at stake.

High School Voter Registration – March

We're headed to Charlottesville High School and possibly Western Albemarle High School in March to register voters! This is one of the most energizing parts of our work — connecting with the next generation of voters as they step into civic life.

If you'd like to help, please reach out. It's meaningful, fast-paced, and genuinely fun.

Community Voter Registration

Requests for voter registration support are starting to come in. If this is an area you enjoy, we would love to add you to our roster. There is always room for more helping hands.

May 2 – Batesville Day Parade & Outreach

On May 2, we'll be marching in the Batesville Day Parade and hosting a tabling event immediately afterward. This is a wonderful opportunity to expand our outreach into rural communities — registering voters, sharing information, and connecting neighbors to our advocacy work.

Want to walk with us or staff the tent? This is your chance.

Every registration form, every parade conversation, every call to a legislator adds up. This is how we build a stronger civic culture — together.

If any of these opportunities spark your interest, reply to this newsletter or join us at our next Voter Services meeting. There's a place for you here!

Gun Violence Prevention by Meg Heubeck

The following bills are identical or substantially similar have passed their chamber of origin. Several need language tweaks and will be conformed, passed and sent to the Governor very soon.

- [SB38/HB93 DV FIREARM RELINQUISHMENT](#): A bill to require persons who are prohibited from possessing firearms by either a protective order

or certain DV misdemeanor convictions, to comply by relinquishing his/her firearms and providing the Court certification of such.

- [SB160/HB19](#) **INTIMATE PARTNER DEFINITION:** A bill adding a definition of Intimate Partner to the definition of family and household member in the Code of Virginia, so that DV firearm possession prohibitions can also apply to those in a dating relationship.
- [SB323/HB40](#) **GHOST GUNS:** A bill to prohibit the manufacture, assembly, purchase, sale, transfer or possession of undetectable firearms and unserialized frames and receivers (ghost guns).
- [SB27/HB21](#) **INDUSTRY ACCOUNTABILITY:** A bill to establish industry standards, conduct and civil liability.
- [SB495/HB901](#) **RISK ORDER (ERPO) IMPROVEMENT:** A bill to expand petitioners (family & household member and medical treatment providers), clarify the process for orders against minors, and add criteria judges must consider when issuing orders. Passed both the House & Senate.
- [SB272/HB626](#) **FIREARM BAN COLLEGES:** The bills establish in code a ban on firearms on the campuses and inside buildings of public institutions of higher education.
- [SB173/HB229](#) **FIREARM BAN HOSPITALS:** The bills prohibit weapons, including firearms, inside the buildings of hospitals and facilities that provide mental health treatment.

The following bills deal with the same subject matter but have policy impacts to be negotiated between the House & Senate to conform to them. They will pass and be sent to the Governor for signature.

- [SB749](#) & [HB217](#) **ASSAULT WEAPONS:** The Senate bill would ban the sale of assault rifles with a fixed magazine capacity of 15 rounds or greater; the House bill would ban the sale of assault rifles & pistols with a fixed magazine of 10 rounds or greater. Each bill has passed their body of origin; the bills will need to be conformed before they go to the Governor.
- [SB348](#) & [HB871](#) **SAFE STORAGE HOMES:** The Senate bill would require firearms (loaded or unloaded) to be locked in a safe; the house version requires unloaded guns to be stored in any safe and loaded guns may only be stored in biometric safes.
- [SB496](#) & [HB110](#) **SAFE STORAGE VEHICLES:** The Senate bill requires handguns to be in a locked container affixed to the vehicle (glove box & center console qualify) when the vehicle is unattended. The House bill prohibits storing a handgun in a vehicle when it is visible to a person outside an unattended vehicle.
- [SB364](#) & [HB969](#) **CENTER FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION:** The Senate bill establishes a work group that would establish an office of gun violence prevention at Department of Criminal Justice Service to expand approaches to preventing gun violence including research, evaluation of programs, coordination of state agencies. The House version would also establish a work group at DCJS with similar goals. Both bills have a delayed enactment clause of July 1, 2027.
- [HB1525](#) & [SB643](#) ([substitute](#)) **PURCHASE PROHIBITIONS 18-20 YR OLDS:** Both bills prohibit the purchase of handguns and assault weapons; the House bill contains certain exemptions, while Senate version does not have those same exemptions.
- [SB727](#) & [HB1524](#) **A BAN ON OPEN CARRY OF ASSAULT WEAPONS:** Generally, both bills would prohibit the open carry of certain assault weapons. The Senate version does not include pistols and has a magazine limit of 15 rounds; the house version does include pistols and has a magazine limit of 10 rounds.

The following bills do not have cognates but have passed their body of origin. We are working towards passage in the other body and are hopeful for success on all of these.

- [SB115](#) **REPEAL CONCEALED CARRY RECIPROCITY:** The bill repeals the requirement that Virginia recognize and accept any concealed carry permit from every state in the US. The bill would re establish a process whereby permits from other states are evaluated to determine if they meet Virginia standards and only then would Virginia recognize any other state permits and keep a list of those publicly available.
- [HB896](#) **RISK ORDER TRAINING:** The bill requires the Department of Criminal Justice Services to establish programs to educate and train law enforcement, public safety officials, medical professionals and other on the proper use of Risk Orders and to provide an annual report on the program.
- [HB1096](#) **RISK ORDER REPORTING:** Requires Virginia State Police to produce and publish a monthly report, by locality, of all Substantial Risk Orders issued by the Courts in Virginia.
- [HB1071](#) **RISK ORDER EDUCATION SCHOOLS:** The bill requires the Center for School & Campus Safety/DCJS to provide education to K-12 & Higher Education Threat Assessment teams on the use of Risk Orders to address threats of violence.
- [HB1015](#) **GUN PROHIBITION AFTER HATE CRIMES:** The bill prohibits possession and transport of firearms after certain misdemeanor convictions of hate crimes
- [SB763](#) **EXCISE TAX ON FIREARMS MANUFACTURERS:** The bill would establish an excise tax of 11% on manufacturers on the sale & distribution of firearms in the Commonwealth and the revenues are noted to support gun violence prevention efforts in the state.
- [HB909](#) **POLLING PLACES:** The bill extends the firearm prohibition from 40' to 100' of the entrance to polling places and electoral board meeting places.
- [HB702](#) **GUN BUY & GIVE BACKS:** The bill requires law enforcement agencies to develop policies and procedures to provide guidelines to allow citizens to surrender unwanted firearms to law enforcement.
- [HB916](#) **CONCEALED CARRY DEMONSTRATED COMPETENCE:** The bill removes the requirement that a concealed handgun permit training course must be conducted by the National Rifle Association or the United States Concealed Carry Association.

Natural Resources Committee by Peggy Gilges

In Fluvanna County, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) will vote on a proposal by Nebraska company Tenaska to build a second, larger gas-fired power plant in rural Fluvanna near Scottsville. The proposed 1.5 gigawatt plant would release an estimated 143 tons of health-damaging fine particulate matter into the air annually, increasing exposure to air pollution across central Virginia. The plant would also release an estimated 1.5 million tons of CO2 into the atmosphere annually, along with greenhouse gases nitrous oxide and fugitive methane, accelerating climate warming and its catastrophic effects. The power from this plant is not needed by Virginia's residents but would serve the data center industry. Find full details about the plant's regional impacts at [Fluvanna Horizons Alliance](#). Contact the Fluvanna BOS (clerk@fluvannacounty.org) no later than **March 17th** to ask that they deny Tenaska's special use permit application.

Yet another way in which the data center industry is affecting our communities: new, bigger electric transmission infrastructure. Dominion Energy is proposing to rebuild two transmission lines through Albemarle County, one running from Doods in Augusta County through Crozet to Charlottesville, and another from Charlottesville to Gordonsville. The [Piedmont Environmental Council](#) has detailed information about how these miles-long projects will affect our viewsheds, waterways, forests and parklands on their way to serve data centers to our north. And ratepayers will be footing the bill! On **March 3**, Dominion Energy will hold an [open house](#) to answer questions about the Cville-Gordonsville rebuild. The largest transmission line currently under discussion is a 115-mile long 765kV “electric super highway” dubbed the [Joshua Falls-Yeat transmission line](#). This greenfield development would require extensive clearing and land disturbance through the scenic Piedmont. Community meetings looking at route options will be held in March.

NRC urges your advocacy to shape a more secure and healthy future for us all. The next meeting of the NRC will be held on **March 23**.

International Relations and Foreign Government by Gerry Kruger

On February 18, 2026, the International Relations/ Federal Government Committee met at Linden House primarily to discuss redistricting, the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC) and Venezuela. These were the next 3 topics our group selected when we voted by ranked-choice. We had already discussed ranked-choice voting, which the League supports. Members present were Anita Pilling, who led our discussion, Kevin Yates, Carol Cutler, Miriam Fleitman, Bobbi Williams, Lois Sandy, and Gerry Kruger. Also attending were Fran Stone, a resident at Linden house and Jo Hoyl, who recently moved to Charlottesville from Louisa.

Because it is a partisan issue, the League is not supporting Virginia’s redrawing of congressional districts which would expire in October, 2030. Virginia’s proposal is different from Texas and other red states’ gerrymandering because it is being submitted to the voters for approval and is temporary.

But the League does support the NPVIC, which was drafted in 2006 in response to George Bush’s election after he lost the popular vote. It would require congressional approval for 50%+1 of all states to award their electoral votes to whichever presidential ticket wins the overall popular vote. As of now 38.8% of the states have enacted this legislation. This does not include Virginia, which had not enacted it when Anita prepared her presentation.

Finally, our group discussed the US attack on Venezuela. President Trump has announced that the US is now in charge of Venezuela and that Venezuelans, the US, and the rest of the world are better off without the drug cartels supported by Maduro. He believes Venezuelan oil will be refined and will be an economic boon. Others disagree because the oil there is extremely expensive to refine and could discourage investment.

Our next meeting will take place on March 19 at 1:00 pm. We will discuss Iran, the next topic chosen by our members. Join us as we delve into the relationship between the US and Iran.

Update Your LWV-CVA Handbook

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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LWV CVA Calendar of Events March 2026

Mark your Calendars

March 4 8:30am, WLRT Session, via Zoom
Sign up at link above

March 10 5pm, Voter Services Meeting, via Zoom
Contact kwharris555@gmail.com to join

March 11 8:30am, WLRT Session, via Zoom
Sign up at link above

March 11 7pm, New Member Zoom, via Zoom
Contact president@lwv-cva.org for link to join

March 19 1pm, IR/FG Meeting, Linden House

March 19 3pm, Board Meeting, Hybrid via Zoom or Northside Library
Contact president@lwv-cva.org for link to join

March 24 4pm, Natural Resources Meeting, Hybrid via Zoom or
Piedmont Environmental Council Office

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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