



The Virginia Voter

100+ Years Strong

League of Women Voters of Virginia
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United States

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President's Message

Election Hero Day is October 20, 2026. Unfortunately, the bill sponsored by Delegate Paul Kirzek which would have allowed us to once again buy pizzas or coffee for our hard-working election officials, was vetoed by Governor Spanberger. (He will introduce again this year and we will advocate again.)

This should not stop us from dropping off thank you notes to their offices. Our election officials are under tremendous stress these days and it is important to show them that we have their backs.

This is also a great project for young people – little kids love to make posters and collages, etc. Let them get their creative juices flowing. In addition, it is a terrific way to introduce them to election officials and the work they do. Bring them with you when you drop off their handiwork.

Let's make this a great Election Hero Day--because these people deserve it.

Thanks for all you do.

Joan

ELECT to Notify Over 200,000 Newly Re-enfranchised Citizens

Thanks to the hard work of our attorneys at the Campaign Legal Center, we reached an agreement with the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) so that they would notify the 200,000 people now re-enfranchised under the King Vs. O'Bannon case.

We are thankful for their work and were proud to work with Bridging the Gap on this.

Remember: ANYONE WHO HAS NOT BEEN CONVICTED OF MURDER, VOLUNTARY OR INVOLUNTARY MANSLAUGHTER CAN NOW REGISTER AND VOTE IN THE NOV 3 ELECTIONS.

It is crucially urgent that we get the word out. Can we count on you to let folks know their voice finally has a say in our democracy? Complete [this form](#) **now** and someone will be in touch soon.

Many of these people may not know they can now vote! You can choose text bank, phone bank, canvassing - whatever you prefer!!

SPREAD THE WORD AND GET THEM REGISTERED!!!!!!

Volunteers Needed: Help Study Proxy Voting for the Virginia Legislature

Right now, no U.S. state allows proxy voting — letting an absent legislator formally designate a colleague to cast their vote — though it's used in a handful of other legislatures, including the European Parliament, and Congress briefly adopted a version during COVID. The League has no position on proxy voting yet, which means we can't advocate for or against it in Virginia until members study the issue and adopt one.

I'm looking for 4 to 5 members willing to join a study group focused specifically on proxy voting in the Virginia General Assembly. It's a narrow, contained topic — a great entry point if you've ever wondered what a League study is like but haven't taken the plunge. **Update: We only need one more volunteer!**

Here's how this will unfold: if enough of you express interest, I'll follow up to walk through what the study involves and confirm who's ready to commit. With a solid core group in hand, I'll bring the proposal to the Virginia League Board to request a spot on the 2027 Convention agenda. Without committed volunteers first, I won't submit the proposal at all — so your interest now genuinely determines whether this happens.

At its heart, this is about small, practical legislative reform: helping our elected representatives navigate the ordinary demands of life — illness, childbirth, family emergencies — without disenfranchising the constituents who elected them. Even amid political upheaval, the work of strengthening democracy often happens in small, careful steps.

Interested? Reach out to me (Pam Berg) directly [here](#)

Are YOU Benefiting Financially From ICE Activity? Shocked By That Question?

ICE Network Issue Group

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and its Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) division have been given billions of tax dollars to operate immigrant detention centers. About 90% of the ICE detention facilities in the U.S. are operated by private companies contracted by DHS. The biggest prison management companies are The GEO Group (GEO) and CoreCivic (CXW). Both are stock traded companies and are registered with the State Corporation Commission to do business in Virginia. CoreCivic owns and operates the ICE Farmville Detention Center in Prince Edward County.

Recognizable institutional investors are invested in these private prison companies. For example, over 12% of CoreCivic is owned by Vanguard and that stock is found in some of Vanguard's funds. Blackrock, the world's largest asset management company, owns almost 15% of The GEO Group. These are huge ownership stakes for any one investor. Other recognizable names in institutional investment holdings include UBS Group, iShares, Pentwater, Goldman Sachs, and State Street.

What can you do?

If this makes you feel uncomfortable you can...

1. Tell your financial manager or broker to block the buying of these companies either individually or in mutual funds or EFTs (Exchange-Traded Fund). Brokers should have the ability to place 'buy restrictions' on your portfolio.
2. Have a **pension** fund through an employer? Contact your pension fund management and explain that they should divest the funds that include these companies. Spread the word.
3. If you manage your own portfolio, check for recognized ticker symbols and set bans on them using whatever software you use to manage your investments.

Private Equity too...

It was a shock when I read that a commercial property private equity firm Blue Owl, an investment recommended by my advisor, was selling warehouses to DHS. I had them removed from my portfolio. Many other private companies are being contracted by DHS to find, transport, or detain immigrant U.S. residents. It is up to each of us.

Stop Slogans and Fix Schools!

This editorial, recently published in the *Richmond Times Dispatch*, was written by the head of our Education Issue Group, Anna Mason.

[Read it here](#)

Legislative Priorities for 2027

Looking Ahead to the 2027 General Assembly Session, the Board has approved these [legislative priorities](#) as presented by the Issue Groups.

To join or learn more about issue groups [click here](#).

Misinformation/Disinformation

Mis/Dis is on the road! On October 14 at 3p, Carolyn Caywood (LWW South Hampton Roads) will be at the Yorktown Library to discuss how misinformation is communicated and the value of checking multiple sources before reaching a conclusion. The presentation will use the children's picture book *Don't Trust Fish* by Neil Sharpton.

According to Commonsense Media. "An unidentified narrator describes how tricky fish can be in *Don't Trust Fish*. The story starts out in a serious tone, listing the natural characteristics of different animals, including mammals, reptiles, birds, and amphibians. As for fish, some breathe with lungs and others with gills. They disguise themselves as catfish and tigerfish. Some lay eggs and others don't.

Some eat seaweed, and others eat other fish or crabs. Some even live in the deepest ocean waters and have bioluminescence to attract crabs. Bottom line: Fish don't follow rules. A fisherman, telescope, aquarium, toilet, and sunken ship figure in. Robotic fish too. Then comes the reveal...The surprise narrator is at a computer keyboard typing the story in this tell-all."

If you would like to see the author reading the book, click [here](#)

This presentation can be shared virtually or live with other LWV chapters and community groups.

Join the Mis/Dis Subcommittee or any issue group at [this site](#).

2027 Women's Legislative Roundtable and League Day Schedule

The schedule for the Women's Legislative Roundtables (WLRTs) and League Day have been approved by the Board.

League Day will be in person - WLRTs are virtual

2027

Jan 13 Voting and Elections

Jan 20 ICE

Jan 27 League Day Defending Democracy (in person)

Feb 3 Reproductive Rights and Housing

Feb 10 Health and Gun and Domestic Violence

Feb 17 Education and Environment

Feb 24 Wrap Up

SAVE THE DATE: Presession will be virtual on December 2.

Get Ready for the Holiday Season: Support the League

What better way to support the League than by giving holiday gifts with our branding?

Here are links to the LWV VA store and a few of our local leagues. Support the League!

[Virginia](#)

[Arlington and Alexandria City](#)

[Fairfax Area](#)

[Falls Church](#)

EVENTS

Election Protection - Make Sure Everyone Knows About the Election Protection Hotline

As early voting begins in Virginia, voters should call the non-partisan [Election Protection Hotline](#)--866-Our-Vote- if they experience or witness voter intimidation of any kind. This includes the presence of federal or local law enforcement, aggressive electioneering, and discriminatory or hateful behavior. The Election Protection Hotline is administered by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and, alongside the suite of in-language Election Protection Hotlines offering assistance in Spanish, Asian languages, and Arabic, is staffed by trained nonpartisan volunteers. For any voting questions or problems, call 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) to defend your right to vote.

This is also a great sign if someone has a question about voting. Take a picture of the card below so you have it on your phone in case you need it.

Let's do this!



Textbanking With LWVUS

Join fellow League members as we textbank voters with GOTV and Election Protection messaging on the following dates:

Oct 1, 2026 6:00 PM ET

Oct 22, 2026 6:00 PM ET

Oct 29, 2026 6:00 PM ET

Sign up [here](#)

Be an Election Protection Worker in Virginia

During early voting and on Election Day this November, the Virginia Civic Engagement Table VCET is again signing up people to be Election Protection Poll Watchers especially for the Saturday and Sunday voting periods - Oct 18, 24, 25 and 31. VCET will cover travel costs etc.

Jobs include:

Stationary Voter Advocate: remain at a single voting location for the entire duration of their shift. They are trained to answer voter questions and report issues to the command center if they occur.

Roving Voter Advocate: move between several close-together voting locations for the duration of their shift. They are trained to answer voter questions and report issues to the command center if they occur, completing check-in checklists at each location that they visit.

Sign Team: plays a key role in the placement and removal of 866-OUR-VOTE hotline signs at early voting and election day locations. Sign Team Members will receive yard signs from a regional distribution location prior to the start of early voting or election day and place them at assigned voting locations. After voting ends, Sign Team Members are responsible for picking up placed signs to be returned to Virginia Election Protection.

Legal Advocate: assigned a primary polling place for their shift but expected to move to another if their assistance is needed. Legal Advocates play a more elevated role in advocating for voters and are trained to - if needed - take declarations from voters and assist in the drafting of legal materials. The Legal Advocate role is available to individuals with law degrees as well as law students. Volunteers are not required to be barred in Virginia and will not be giving formal legal advice.

Use [website to sign up](#).

Voter Registration Training

The Department of Elections has one more teacher-led training available. All League members who do voter registration need to take this training. (Check with your local league to see if they need voter registration forms offered when you complete the class.) RSVP [here](#) for the class of your choice. You will find classes under Section B

Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 11 AM:

LWV US NEWS

The Young Voter Power Initiative - YVPI - is Now Online

The League of Women Voters of the United States has activated the Young Voter Power Initiative, YVPI. YVPI is meant to be an additional/specialized civic home within the League for young people ages 18–30: a place to belong, to learn how to utilize political power to impact public decisions, and to take action in coalition with other motivated young people. Participants don't have to be a student or an experienced organizer to join. YVPI meets young people where they already are: workplaces, barbershops and salons, rec leagues, community colleges, union and apprenticeship halls, and faith spaces, not just four-year campuses.

The program is built around pods, small groups that give every member a home base.

Regional pods connect participants with young people in their part of the country. Each is co-led by a League Regional Organizer and volunteer Youth Leads. This is where members plan their actions, and where Regional Organizers encourage relationship-building with state and local Leagues.

Issue pods bring members together nationally around what they care about most: voting rights and fair elections, how money and private interests shape public decisions, cost of living, and climate and community.

These pods produce shared toolkits, explainers, teach-in guides, etc.

Overarchingly, YVPI is built to provide:

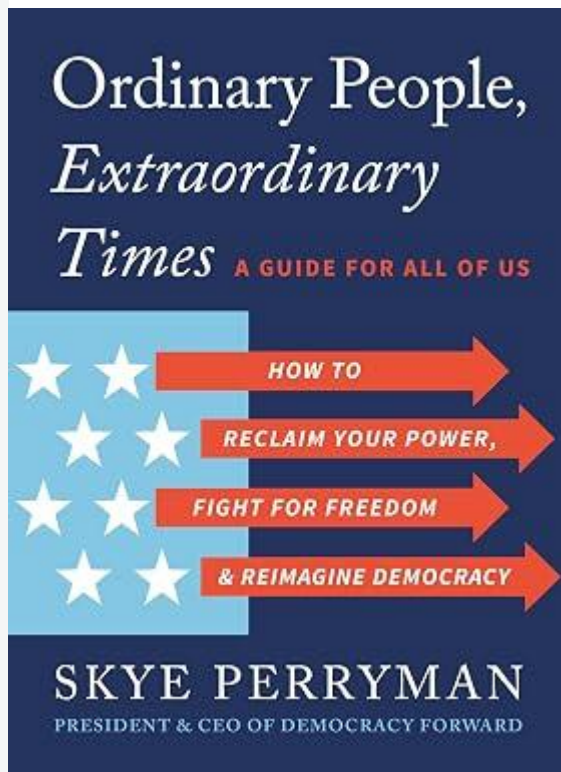
- training in practical skills
- ready-to-use materials

- grants to fund actions members lead, from cookouts to pop-ups to creator labs

For overview and FAQ [Click here](#)

Young people interested in signing up should go [here](#)

New Resource for Activists



The League of Women Voters of US is excited for the release of Skye Perryman's new book, Ordinary People, Extraordinary Times. This is a manual for everyone on how we can move forward from this political movement and should be on everyone's reading list!

Order your copy [here](#) or at your favorite bookstore.

LWV VA NEWS

Tribal Conference

For the third year, LWV Virginia participated in the Tribal Nations Tribal Conference. Here, Chief Anne Richardson of the Rappahannock Tribe opens the Conference



LWV VA participates in the Nottoway PowWow for the first time

From left Jill Whitten - LWV Williamsburg Area, Evette Barton - LWV VA DEI Chair, Donnie Carson - LWV VA Membership Chair, Peggy Johnson - LWV South Hampton Roads, Jane Banfield - LWV Williamsburg Area



Shining at the Gala

Evette Barton (left) and Sherelle Carper of the LWV DEI Committee at the National Council of Negro Women Gala.

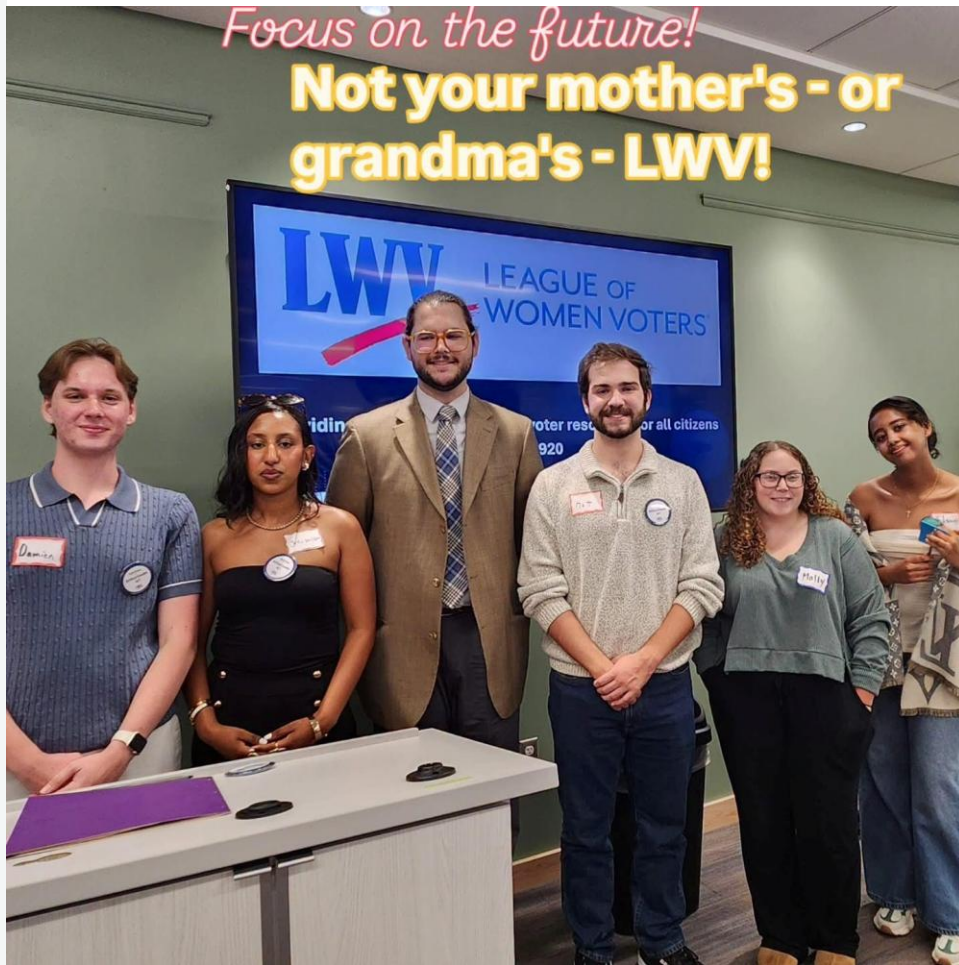
LWV US CEO, Celina Stewart was the keynote speaker.



LOCAL LEAGUES

No, We are Not Your Mother's or Grandma's League Anymore

Thanks to the team at the George Mason University, which is part of the LWV Fairfax Area, who held a seminar on the three amendments! From left Damien Raythen, Jerusalem Mekonnen, President of LWV Fredericksburg Area, Theodore Blackwell, Matt Romano, Molly Flaherty, and Edom Yohannes.



Addressing Virginia's Energy Costs LWV Charlottesville Area

Voter Services Chair, Kim Harris, and President Lisa Hilgartner of the LWV of the Charlottesville Area at the Protect Virginia's Energy Costs Listening tour spot in Jefferson School, Charlottesville.



Back to College - LWV Greater Roanoke Valley

Our Greater Roanoke Valley team is hard at work registering people at Roanoke College.

Front row : Donna Repa and Karen Skeens.

Back Row: Carole Tarrant, Kathy Fredrich, Sallie Childers , Sandra Burks and Shirley Everett.



African Heritage Multicultural Festival LWV Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro

The LWV Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro brings voter registration to their community. Here, Voters Services Director Becky Marlowe, left, and unit leader, Evette Barton are serving at the African Heritage Multicultural Festival.



ALSO, thanks to SAW for the great drive!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STAUNTON, AUGUSTA &
WAYNESBORO

Hygiene Drive Reaches 1,100 Pounds and \$224 in Gifts

The League of Women Voters of Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro is proud to share the updated results of our hygiene drive supporting the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (BRAFB). Through the generosity of neighboring businesses, individuals, and community partners, LWV–SAW collected 1,100 pounds of hygiene products and \$224 in monetary gifts.

The monetary gifts will provide more than 672 meals for people in our community. When food costs are covered, families can redirect limited household funds toward soap, toothpaste, sanitary products, and other hygiene essentials.

The donated products, including toilet paper, sanitary products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, baby wipes, and other everyday

necessities, will be distributed through the Food Bank's strong network of partner agencies and ultimately placed in the hands of neighbors who need them. The Food Bank noted that the community is experiencing the highest level of need in its 45-year history, with more than 178,000 guest visits recorded on average each month.

Although the Food Bank cannot provide a precise number of families who will benefit from the hygiene donation, the supplies are expected to be distributed quickly. The BRAFB expressed its deep gratitude for LWV-SAW's efforts and for the support of our partners, including the Waynesboro Unitarian Church, the Staunton YMCA, the Fishersville Augusta County Library, and countless local stores, churches, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

We are especially thankful to everyone who donated products, gift cards, money, time, and energy to this effort. Together, our community responded to an important need with compassion and action.

Lynchburg Day! LWV Central Virginia

The League of Central Virginia at Lynchburg Day in the Park sponsored by the Junior League.

Jen Willinger (left) and Sue Stengel. Kelly Ward is behind the desk.

Don't worry, Sammy the Tortoise tried to register but he didn't have a verified Virginia address. (And for conspiracy theorists without a sense of humor, that was a joke.)



October 2026 Calendar

Voter Education Month

5-9 - Natl. Voter Education Week

11th - International Day of the Girl

12th - Indigenous Peoples' Day

18th - Sunday voting available!

20th - Election Hero Day

23rd - Last Day to register to vote and vote on a regular ballot

24th - Same day voter registration begins - it must be done at an early polling location OR your regular polling place on Election Day. Check vote411 for information.

24th - United Nations Day

24 and 25 - Saturday and Sunday voting available!

27th - VOTE411's 20th Birthday

31st - Saturday voting available!!!

[unsubscribe](#)."