



Charlottesville Area
League of Women Voters
Newsletter
March 2018

Office Phone:
(434) 970-1707

E-mail:
lwv@lwv-cva.org

Visit Our Website:
lwv-cva.org

Sunday Seminar

Sunday, March 18, 2018
2 – 3:30 pm
CitySpace
Charlottesville - Downtown Mall

Guest Speaker: Pat Fishback



League of Women Voters representative Pat Fishback, at podium, was one of a large group of ERA supporters that filled the House Privileges and Elections Committee meeting at the state Capitol on Friday, February 9.

Why is the ERA important? Why hasn't it been ratified? Will it ever be ratified?

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the United States Constitution was first introduced in Congress in 1923 and finally passed in 1972. However the amendment failed to get the required number of states to ratify the ERA by the 1982 deadline. Since 1982, the ERA has been introduced in each session of Congress. Pat Fishback, LWV of the Richmond Metro Area and an avid ERA activist since the mid-seventies, will help answer these questions and more. Interspersed in her presentation will be excerpts from the film, "Equal Means Equal." Join us for a rousing discussion on **Sunday, March 18, 2 – 3:30 pm, CitySpace, Downtown Mall.**

2018 LWV CVA Finance Drive

By Marguerite Cox, Finance Chair

On behalf of the Board of our League, I want to say a heartfelt “thank you” to all those who have so far contributed to our 2018 Fund Drive. Because most of the dues we pay go to the State and National Leagues, we depend primarily on our fund drive to continue to bring programs and activities to our community. To date, we have received \$4443.10 as follows,

Members: Education Fund: \$884.10
Operating Fund: \$2340.00
Total Donations: \$3224.10

Non-Members: Education Fund: \$852.00
Operating Fund: \$367.00
Total Donations: \$1219.00

If you have not yet contributed to the fund drive, I urge you to do so. No donation is too small and every dollar is used to do the following:

- Encourage informed and active participation in government
- Increase understanding of major public policy issues
- Influence public policy through education and advocacy.

We also want to again thank those who spent a Saturday afternoon assembling the Fund Drive mailing.

Please note: It was brought to our attention that the “Donate” button on our new website was not working properly, but this problem has now been corrected. You can make your donation online: Go to lwv-cva.org and click on the “Donate” button by scrolling all the way down to the bottom of the home page, and then follow the prompts from there.

Coming in next month’s newsletter: Reservation form for the Annual Meeting Luncheon

The Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area will be held **Thursday, May 10, at Noon, at The Greencroft Club**, Rodes Road, Charlottesville. We are pleased to announce that our guest speaker will be Pam Moran, superintendent, Albemarle County Public Schools.

Annual Meeting packets will be mailed to members two weeks before the May 10 date. Reservations **with payment** for the luncheon must be received by Tuesday, April 24. Look for the reservation form **with menu choices** in our April newsletter.



LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 28, 1:30 – 3:00 pm, University Village

Guest Speaker: Bill Mawyer, Executive Director of the Rivanna Authorities

The LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee invites you to the next meeting on March 28, with guest speaker, Bill Mawyer. You may recall, we originally advertised having him in the fall, but we had to postpone, and are happy now that he will join us to talk about the community's water supply plan and solid waste and recycling plans.

Firearms Safety Committee Report by Natalie Testa, LWV CVA Firearms Safety Committee

The Fate of the Firearms Bills in the 2018 General Assembly

Thanks to all of you who attended the January Sunday Seminar coordinated by our committee. Our speaker updated us on the bills introduced in the Virginia General Assembly this year. Since then, most of the bills have been addressed, so here is the current update.

While the General Assembly is still in session, the majority of the firearm bills were killed in committee. Of the firearm bills that the LWV CVA supported, 79 of the 81 bills were defeated, and only two have survived: (1) a bill that approves the "Gun Violence Prevention" license plate, and (2) a technical change bill by Creigh Deeds which closes an age-related loophole in the prohibition of firearms ownership by minors ordered involuntarily into outpatient mental health treatment.

Of the seven House bills and the eight Senate bills that the League opposed, it appears that just one House bill will survive to crossover. HB1398 will allow initial applications for "Concealed Handgun Permits" to be made by mail rather than the current requirements of an in-person request with the issuing court. If this bill passes, it could be vetoed by the Governor. Of the Senate bills introduced, only one, allowing guns in churches, passed the Senate floor but, to date, it does not appear that the House will act on it.

While the firearm bills that the League supported did not make it out of the committee, the Gun Violence Prevention Coalition effectively killed bills that would have allowed:

- concealed carry on campus,
- the concealment of concealed carry data from law enforcement in their states,
- the overthrow of property rights to allow people to keep guns locked in vehicles in employer-owned parking lots, and
- several bills intended to chip away at the vestiges of our concealed-carry permit system.

Although there was a lack of forward progress this year we should not lose sight of the fact that five years ago there were ten bad bills to every one good bill. This year it was the reverse.

Thank you to all the Leaguers who participated in the MLK 26th Annual Vigil and Advocacy Day in Richmond and the many of you who contacted your legislators to advocate for sensible firearm safety legislation.

International Relations /Federal Government Committee News

By Gerry Kruger

Beth Alley welcomed us on February 14 to her country home and, along with **Maggie Hoover**, arranged for our membership to hear **Frank Sullivan of *Sin Barreras* (Spanish for "without borders"). *Sin Barreras* is a small NGO in Charlottesville that offers services to our immigrant, mostly Hispanic community.** Beth and Maggie met Frank when attending naturalization ceremonies at the courthouse.

He spent 25 years in Latin American countries as an agricultural economist, and developed a great affinity for the people there. This why he now serves as a volunteer for organization, offering advice and guidance as the immigrants traverse the complicated and often frightening situations they find themselves in. Although he is not a lawyer, he is allowed to work with the immigrants because of his background.

Our speaker said the current immigration situation is not new. There have been waves of anti-immigration sentiment for decades. Only about 50,000 visas are given in the entire United State a year. It's impossible to legally immigrate to the United States without having a relative who is a U.S. Citizen or very high skills. He also says that references to "chain migration" are misleading. Only close relatives such as mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters have been allowed to migrate here, not cousins, aunts, and uncles.

There are two key issues at the root of all the problems that illegal immigrants in Charlottesville face. First, a path for legal status is next to impossible. Second, Virginia has some of the most stringent laws in regard to undocumented immigrants obtaining driver's licenses. When a work permit expires, so does the driver's license. One woman drove for 15 years and couldn't renew her license. If caught three times without a license, an illegal immigrant is taken to jail and eventually sent to a detention center.

Virginia has a detention center in Farmville that has now become overcrowded. Frank said one of his clients was sent from Farmville to Texas to be detained. Immigrants can't survive without working, and losing a license to drive to work can result in losing their only means of survival. Thus, they are forced to drive without a license and risk deportation by doing so. Being stopped for a broken taillight and can result in deportation.

In January executive orders expanded the area in which ICE could arrest and deport undocumented immigrants. Members of the Hispanic community are not reporting crimes in their communities for fear of deportation. Frank said they have workshops for parents in order for them to make arrangements for their children if they are deported. Sometimes neighbors agree to be named in this regard since there may be no family members to tend to the children left behind.

The anti-immigrant climate has become more intense under the Trump presidency. In January executive orders expanded the area in which ICE could arrest and deport undocumented immigrants. Members of the Hispanic community are not reporting crimes in their communities for fear of deportment. There is a hunker-down mentality and psychological consequences that come from insecurity.

Although immigration opponents would have us believe otherwise, there is an economic advantage to having a pathway to citizenship for immigrants. Undocumented immigrants pay approximately \$11.7 billion in taxes each year--7 billion in sales tax, \$3.6 billion in property tax, and \$1.1 billion in income taxes. If they had legal status, their total contribution to state and local tax coffers would be \$2.2 billion higher.

Continued on next page

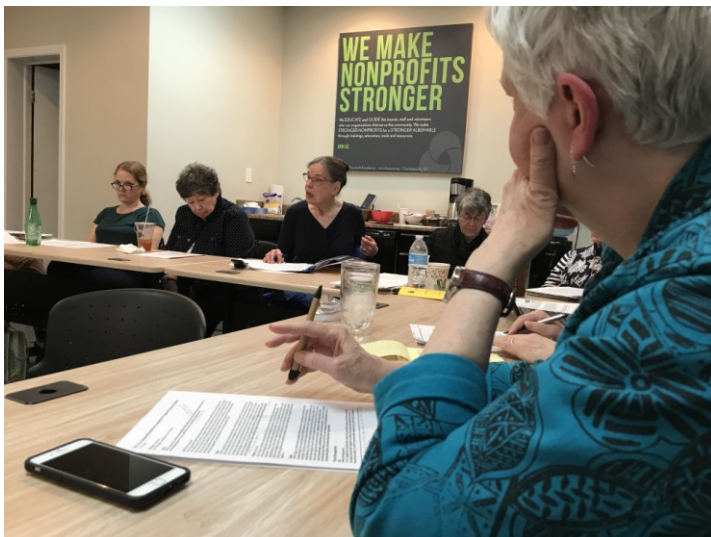
International Relations/Federal Government Committee News

Continued from previous page

Frank Sullivan speaks as often as possible to groups such as ours because he hopes more people will become politically and socially involved with this issue. We can write our representatives, support local initiatives, and volunteer in groups such as Sin Barreras, the Legal Aid Justice Center, Cville Organizing, SURJ, Indivisible Charlottesville, and others.

Join us for informative programs of the LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Committee. See page 6 of this newsletter for dates and venues.

Program Planning 2018 of the *League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area* took place on February 20 with Vice-President Rosalie Simari leading the meeting in review of National (LWV US) and Local (LWV CVA) positions. The group consensus was that we did not want more studies on programs we currently have. What was wanted is more action on these programs, more LWV lobbyists in Congress, and more opportunities locally to present our views.



Muriel Grim, [left center] LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee member, submits editorial changes to the “Action” statements of the Natural Resources local position on Energy, Land Uses, and Water, along with a new statement on Waste Management. These edits will be submitted for approval to members at the Annual Meeting on May 10.



League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area
1932 Arlington Blvd. #111
Charlottesville, VA 22903-1560

LWV CVA

President

Kerin Yates

Newsletter Editor

Michele Kellermann

Coming Thursday, May 10

**The Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area,
The Greencroft Club, Noon. Luncheon reservation form in the April newsletter.**

**Meetings and Events for March 2018:
Mark Your Calendars Now!**

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Wed., March 14, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Rosalie Simari, 107 Rowledge Place, 295-7325	For further information, contact Natalie Testa, 589-4067
Wed., March 14, 1:30 – 3:30 pm	LWV CVA Board Meeting – All members welcome	Westminster Canterbury, Pantops, Charlottesville	For further information, contact KerinYates, 964-1840
Sun., March 18, 2 – 3:30 pm	“Why is the ERA Important?” with guest speaker, Pat Fishback	CitySpace, Downtown Mall, Charlottesville (parking in Market St. garage)	For further information, contact KerinYates, 964-1840
Wed., March 28 , 1:30 – 3:00 pm	LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting: Guest Speaker – Bill Mawyer, Director, Rivanna Authorities	University Village (small committee room) at 500 Crestwood Dr., Charlottesville	For further information, contact Sally Thomas, 434-295-1819
Wed., March 28, 9:30 am	International Relations/Federal Gov't. Committee Meeting	Home of Dena Imlay, 2014 Meadowbrook Rd., 296-6651	For further information, contact Natalie Testa, 589-4067