

LWV CVA Sunday Seminar – A Free Online Event

Gun Violence Prevention

Legislative Update with Guest Speaker, Andrew Goddard

Sunday, March 14, 2021, 2 – 3 pm



Last year's Virginia 2020 General Assembly passed significant gun violence protection legislation that, as a result, makes Virginia a safer place to live. Despite these great strides, however, there was still work to be done. Ghost guns (guns that do not have serial numbers) should be banned, guns should be taken away from domestic violence abusers, and banning guns from polling places were just a few of the bills considered in the 2021 session.

For an update on these and other bills passed by the 2021 General Assembly, please join us on March 14 for a presentation by Andrew Goddard. Andy is the Legislative Director of the **Virginia Center for Public Safety** and an active advocate for sensible gun legislation. Andy will also provide background on issues and welcomes questions.

The LWV-CVA Firearm Safety Committee and the Charlottesville Coalition of Gun Violence Prevention are sponsoring this Zoom presentation. Please email your questions prior to the presentation to maggie.hoover@gmail.com. During the presentation you will have an opportunity to ask questions using the "chat" feature in Zoom.

This is an online event: **Here is the link to get your free Eventbrite "Ticket":**

To Join the Zoom Sunday Seminar on March 14, 2 – 3 pm
Click here on ["Tickets"](#) and register!

Or copy and paste this link to your browser:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/gun-violence-prevention-legislative-update-with-andrew-goddard-tickets-143455564455>

The link to join will be emailed to ticket registrants prior to the event.

Launching the 2021 Elections!

June 8, 2021 - Primary Elections
November 2, 2021 - General Elections



Upcoming 2021 elections include:

- Governor of Virginia
- Lieutenant Governor
- Attorney General
- Delegates to the Virginia General Assembly's House of Delegates
- Within the city of Charlottesville and neighboring Albemarle County, there are two City Council seats, three City School Board seats, City Commonwealth Attorney, three Board of Supervisor seats, and three County School Board seats up for election this year. Other counties in the Charlottesville Area will have similar local seats up for election.

First up - the June 8 Primary Elections: Elections are by party ballot. In Virginia, you can request either a Democratic or Republican ballot. For governor alone, there are several Democratic and Republican candidates — both established politicians and newcomers — along with a third party candidate. Parties determine whether their candidates will be chosen by primary elections or within a party convention.

Are you a registered voter? You can check your voter registration status at the Virginia Department of Elections website:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/view-your-info/>

Check out these important dates for the upcoming June 8 elections:

June 8 Primaries: Last Day for voter registration: Monday, May 17, 2021 (in person at your local registrar's office: by 5 pm; online through the Virginia Department of Elections website: 11:59 pm).

Early voting in the June 8 Primaries begins on April 25. Check out the Virginia Department of Elections website for information on Absentee and Early Voting:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/absentee-voting/>

President's Message:

Dear Leaguers,

A big "Thank-You" to those of you who gave your time to contact your state legislators during this year's Virginia General Assembly session. Our various LWV CVA board members and committee members worked hard to advocate for the League's Positions with our legislators while they were opining how to vote on many bills. We DO make a difference.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Sunday Seminars and Annual Meeting in the coming months. I would like to remind you to check your spam/promotion email boxes. Our event notices do, occasionally, find their way into those neglected boxes. I would hate for you to miss an event due to the internet world's capricious email routing.

As always, send your thoughts and ideas our way! I pray you all get your vaccines soon. Stay well.

Pat Cochran, president

League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area, lwv@lwv-cva.org

LWV CVA Electoral Boards Observer Corps Report by Kerin Yates

A Reminder: Every year is an election year in Virginia. Official start: March 1, 2021

Following is information in regard to what the electoral boards (EB's) in our area (Nelson, Louisa, Greene, Fluvanna, Charlottesville, Albemarle) have all been discussing and managing. What they all are able to do, or not, impacts our voting. Therefore - pay attention. The Boards are separate jurisdictional entities under the direction of the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT). Most meetings are open to the public either in person or by ZOOM. Dates/agendas/minutes can be found on the county and city websites.

Meetings for all EB's in January and February dealt with the following common topics:

- ELECT's new voting machine certification changes affecting current software.
- Need for increased funds and space both of which are connected to changes in early voting, increased absentee voting, need for additional training – especially for the new software and the software itself. (Software purchase decisions as of this report vary by jurisdiction.)
- Risk Limiting Audit (RLA) See Sue Lewis's article this newsletter, page 4.
- Officer of Election appointments, GA legislation, election integrity, security – both cyber and personnel, census impact and redistricting.

LWV CVA Voter Service Report by Sue Lewis, LWV CVA Voter Service Director

Risk Limiting Audits (in the form of a Q & A)

You may have come across the term “risk limiting audit” in various business news, but unless you have been intimately involved with election integrity issues you may not have come across it in relation to our elections. In fact, it is used to support the integrity of our elections.

This information was taken from a Press Release from the Virginia Department of Elections dated February 15, 2021. We hope this Q & A helps our members and the public understand this important part of the election process.

Charlottesville and Albemarle County performed their audits on February 24, with Kerin Yates and Sue Lewis participating as observers.

Q 1 – What is a Risk Limiting Audit (RLA)?

A 1 – A RLA is a post-election comparison of selected ballots with the results from ballot-scanning machines, conducted by the Virginia Department of Elections (ELECT) in partnership with VotingWorks, a non-profit organization.

Q 2 – Why is this done?

A 2 - The RLA helps to support the integrity of the election process.

Q 3 - When does this take place?

A 3 – This year, the RLA process began on February 16, 2021. It ends on March 2, 2021.

Q 4 – What is being audited?

A 4 – The Presidential and Senatorial votes cast on each ballot.

Q 5 – Who participates in the RLA?

A 5 – General Registrars and Electoral Board members oversee the audit. ELECT chooses the locality, and not every locality in the state participates in the actual audit.

Q 6 – How does the RLA process begin?

A 6 – All 133 localities are informed of the number of ballots to be pulled from the records and examined. This number is set by a random selection of ballot numbers.

Q 7 – What is the process?

- A 7 –**
- 1) If selected, localities upload their ballot manifests.
 - 2) ELECT and VotingWorks generate on February 22, 2021, by an actual roll of dice, a 20-digit random number, which generates the list of ballots to be retrieved by each locality.
 - 3) Localities have three days to upload the vote tallies from those ballots.
 - 4) Localities retrieve their selected paper ballots in a public meeting with two persons doing the retrieval of the ballots and recording of the votes. Outside observers are permitted, including political parties and the press.
 - 5) ELECT reviews the audit results and announces the results on March 2, 2021 at 11:30 am. The audit does not change the certified results of the election.

Coming Up: April Sunday Seminar “Jail and Prison Devoid of Women...”

By Kit Murphy McNally, LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee Chair

Keeping women out of Virginia’s jails and prison should not be hard, all things considered. But *all things* are often neither considered nor supported. That’s one quixotic situation members of the LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee intend to challenge as they plan for an April 18 LWV CVA Sunday Seminar.

In search of deeper understanding and momentum for systemic change, the seminar will draw together influential local justice leaders and advocates for women to consider what’s needed in the realm of law, community services, treatment, support and funding to keep at-risk women safely and restoratively in the community with their children. And equally important, how the benefits of reform will positively impact the entire community.

In Charlottesville there are already services and alternatives to incarceration for women, but not enough or readily available early enough to engage all women at risk. In the surrounding counties which are members of the CVA League, options appear fewer. The targeted focus on justice reform and groundbreaking action in the special legislative session just ended in Richmond, invites communities to look more deeply at Virginia’s local justice systems with thoughts on reform.

The committee’s challenge is narrowing the panel for the Sunday Seminar to present an overview of the issue of women in jail and prison in Virginia, the prevalence and accessibility of restorative alternatives, and lastly a restorative vision of what could be and how to get there — all within an hour and a half.

Save the date — Sunday, April 18, 2-4 pm — and forward any specific questions, concerns or suggestions regarding women in jail and prison to LWV-CVA Justice Reform Committee chair, Kit Murphy McNally, murphymcnally@gmail.com.

LWV CVA Child Care Committee Report by Beth Kariel

The Child Care Committee has followed legislation pertaining to child care in the Virginia General Assembly this year. Additionally, they are following President Biden's proposals for child care.

Beth has been keeping up with the local work of **IMPACT** and **ReadyKids** and recently talked with a member of the **IMPACT** child care research group.

Beth has been participating in the state league Child Care Issue Group which has gotten off to a very good start! Interested in Child Care issues? Contact Beth Kariel, bethkariel9@gmail.com



LWV-VA worked hand in hand with *OneVirginia2021* and others to support the passage of Amendment 1 establishing a redistricting commission on November 3, 2020. Following is a letter from Liz White, *OneVirginia2021*'s new director, bringing up to date the commission's timeline now changed due to covid -19.

OneVirginia2021: Census delays can be an opportunity to get it right on redistricting

The U.S. Census Bureau officially announced on Friday that states will not receive their census data - the information that is used to redistrict - until the end of September. This announcement was not a surprise, given the earlier news that the data would be sent to states around July 31 due to COVID delays, but this later date solidifies that new maps will not be ready for this November's House of Delegates elections in Virginia.

So what does this mean for the current redistricting process?

For candidates for the House of Delegates, this means that they will be running in November on the existing legislative maps. It is not yet known how this decision will officially be reached, since the Virginia Constitution requires elections on new maps in years ending in "1" and that Constitutional deadline will be impossible to meet.

It remains to be seen is whether the Delegate races will have to be held again in 2022 (meaning that they would run three years in a row) or if they will wait until 2023 to utilize the new maps.

One thing is abundantly clear: the ongoing work of the Commission is unchanged by this delay. Their deadlines are contingent on the arrival of the Census data -- so while the map-drawing part of their job will start later, the process will remain the same. See our timeline to better understand the sequence of events that will unfold once the Commission receives the Census data.

Most importantly, our work does not change.

Virginia's new redistricting process creates space, for the first time, for individuals and communities to weigh in on the placement of district boundaries. Consideration of public input - including Communities of Interest - provides Virginians an unprecedented opportunity to tell the mapmakers about their communities.

Our job is to enable people to fill that space. Every group working on this issue will be encouraging and empowering voices that have been historically marginalized in the redistricting process to speak up and use every tool at their disposal to advocate for themselves and their neighbors.

These delays have absolutely nothing to do with the language in the amendment that created the bipartisan commission. In fact, any redistricting scenario would be impacted by a delay of this magnitude. This is the case in every state in the nation -- even those without citizen-led commissions.

There is a bright side to this news: In the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, engaged Virginians have been banding together to create a path forward for those who want our historic commission's work to produce fair and representative district maps, and now they will have additional time to make sure this decade's redistricting is done the right way.

[Click here to see OneVirginia2021 statement and other News + Notes on our website.](#)

LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Committee News

By Gerry Kruger

Lydia Peale continued our Committee's study of the Middle East when we met via Zoom on February 16. Her topic was "The Roots of the Arab-Israeli Conflict." In the beginning this area was completely tribal. No countries existed, and the region was controlled by other countries. Religion has always played an important role among its inhabitants, who practiced Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Eventually the Arabs resented being considered part of this group. They wanted to be considered a distinct group, separate from Jews and Christians. The differences among these groups have been the source of fierce battles and wars for centuries.

The Ottoman period spanned more than 600 years and came to an end in 1922. During this period Arabs (Muslims) controlled the region. In the nineteenth century the Europeans began to take an interest in the region that had been part of the Ottoman Empire. Britain and France sought to increase their military power and saw the Middle East as key to their ambitions.

After World War I in 1917, Arthur Balfour, Foreign Minister of Great Britain, in letter to Lord Rothschild, gives British government approval to the Zionist goal of building a national home for the Jews in Palestine. The letter was published world-wide, and the Arabs felt this was unjust because it ignored the rights of the Palestinians and implied that Arabs were a minority. The United Nations made offers to both the Palestinians and Jews, but neither accepted them. Later, President Truman suggested a two-state solution, but it didn't materialize.

In 1967, during the Six Day War over water and land, the Israelis prevailed over the Palestinians because they had superior military might and one and a half times the number of fighters.

In 1978, the Camp David Accords were signed by Egyptian President Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Begin and witnessed by President Carter. But the United Nations condemned the part that dealt with the Palestinian territories because it was written without participation of the Palestinians.

Most recent, The Abraham Accords are agreements reached by Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and the United States during the Trump Administration. They call for a normalization of relations between Arab countries and Israel. There is speculation about whether President Biden will expand or derail them. His Secretary of State thinks they're beneficial.

What lies in the future of Israel and its Arab neighbors? Lydia says there appear to be four options:

1. The status quo.
2. A one-state solution, based on the premise that it's unlikely that the Jewish settlers in the West Bank will leave.
3. A two-state solution with an Israeli border near the West Bank barrier, encompassing a majority of Israeli settlers.

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LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Committee News

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4. A confederation, a loose association of the two states, based on freedom of movement, porous borders, residency rights and a shared Jerusalem

We invite you to join us as we explore issues that deal with international matters as well as the government within our borders. Our next meeting will be on Zoom on March 17th at 10:00 am. Contact Marge Cox by phone (434-245-5229) or email (margevfcx@gmail.com) for the link.

LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Report by Muriel Grim

Pat Cochran reported that both the state and national LWV are developing climate change issue groups. The LWV-VA has a new "Google Group" about Climate Change. This group is moderated by Carolyn Caywood. It has 58 members at the moment. Here are some links:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/130008547639750/?ref=group_header

<https://lwv-va.org/members-corner/facebook-working-groups/>

<https://lwv-va.org/action/issue-groups/>. Climate change is included under their "Environment" umbrella.

From LWV-US: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/talking-points-lwvus-engagement-green-new-deal-letter-congress>

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/other-issues-tools/toolkit-climate-change>

Preparation began for the next Comprehensive Plan Study meeting in late March. We will be reading Chapter 8 of the Albemarle County Plan, The Development Areas.

We were pleased with the Sunday Seminar and will keep watching most of the activities that were described by the speakers. We discussed the idea of having phone numbers available so that citizens who see violations of regulations or dangerous situations resulting from natural processes such as erosion could report them. This idea will be suggested to Kim Biasioli, Natural Resources Manager, Albemarle County Community Development

For the month of March only our meeting date will change from the 4th Tuesday to the 4th Friday, March 26, at 1 pm. For more information about the LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee, please email Muriel Grim, msggrim2012@gmail.com

LWV CVA 2021 Finance Drive Report by Kerin Yates, Chair, Finance Drive Committee

As of February 15, our 2021 Finance Drive has received from members and friends \$5013 or 68% of our goal. To those of you who have sent a donation, **THANK YOU**. Hard copy “thank you” notes including tax information for Education Fund donations are in the mail. To those of you who may have our 2021 Finance Drive letter waiting on your desk for consideration, we ask that you please take a few minutes and make your planned gift. We hope to wrap up this annual effort by April 1. Should you need information regarding our drive, please contact Kerin Yates at kerinyates@hotmail.com. Donations can be made by check or through Paypal. See our website: lwv-cva.org and click on the “Donate” button by scrolling down to the bottom of the homepage.

Meetings and Events for March 2021: *Mark Your Calendars Now!*

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Sun., March 14, 2 – 3 pm	LWV CVA Sunday Seminar: Gun Violence Prevention – Legislative Update	Virtual Meeting	Click on this ticket link to register for the zoom meeting: tickets
Wed., March 17, 10 am	LWV CVA International Relations/ Federal Gov’t Meeting	Virtual Meeting	Contact Marge Cox, 245-5228, or email margevcox@gmail.com for zoom link
Wed., March 17, 3:00 – 5:00 pm	LWV CVA Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Pat Cochran, 434-326-7873
Fri., March 12, 11 am	LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Kit Murphy McNally, email: murphymcnally@gmail.com
Fri., March 26, 1 pm	LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Muriel Grim, email: msgrim2012@gmail.com
March - TBA	LWV CVA Natural Resources “Comprehensive Plan Study Group” Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Muriel Grim, email: msgrim2012@gmail.com



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