

***LWV CVA Sunday Seminar – A Free Online Event***  
**(See Next Page for "Tickets")**

**Women in Prison: A Problem**

**NOT a Solution**

**Sunday, April 18, 2021, 2 – 4 pm**



**A Panel Discussion with**

**National Perspective:** Aleks Kajstura, Legal Director, Prison Policy Initiative, and  
Author of *Women's Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie*

**Virginia Perspective:** Claire Guthrie Gastanaga, Executive Director, ACLU of Virginia;  
Virginia response to Kajstura's study: *Women in the Criminal Justice System*

**Local Perspective:** Areshini Pather, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney

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 were challenged with as they planned the League's April 18 Sunday Seminar. In search of deeper understanding and momentum for systemic change, the seminar will draw together influential national, state and local justice advocates to underscore the reality of women caught up in the criminal justice system.

**Aleks Kajstura's** research produced *Women's Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie*, a troubling study of 231,000 women and girls incarcerated in the US. In tandem, the Virginia ACLU led by **Claire Guthrie Gastanaga** launched *Women in the Criminal Justice System* focused on Virginia. In Charlottesville, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney **Areshini Pather**, formerly a public defender, knows firsthand the anguish sentencing brings down on women and their families.

When 73% of women in conflict with the law are incarcerated for nonviolent offenses, why are they in jail instead of restorative community alternatives? 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 families. In Charlottesville there are services and alternatives to incarceration for women, but apparently not enough are readily available to engage all women at risk. In the surrounding counties which are members of the Charlottesville Area League, options appear fewer.

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## **Women in Prison: A Problem NOT a Solution**

**LWV CVA Sunday Seminar, April 18, 2021, 2 – 4 pm**

The ACLU report notes: The over-incarceration of women is a symptom of a complex network of social barriers, economic inequality, reproductive injustice, and racial and sexual discrimination deeply woven into our society.

The targeted focus on justice reform and groundbreaking action in the special legislative session in Richmond, invites communities to look more deeply at Virginia's local justice systems with thoughts on reform. The panel for the Sunday Seminar will aim to do just that. Join us for this important discussion.

This is an online event: **To Join the Zoom Sunday Seminar on April 18, 2 – 4 pm**

**Click here on ["Tickets"](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-in-prison-a-problem-not-a-solution-tickets-148499715647) and register!**

Or copy and paste this Eventbrite link to your browser:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-in-prison-a-problem-not-a-solution-tickets-148499715647>

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

### ***About Our Speakers:***



**Aleks Kajstura** is the Legal Director at the Prison Policy Initiative, a national non-profit, non-partisan research and advocacy organization based in Massachusetts. The Prison Policy Initiative is the leading organization working to address the policy and legal implications flowing from the Census Bureau's technical decision to count incarcerated people as residents of the location containing the prison. Kajstura has co-authored several reports analyzing prison gerrymandering in state and local districts and specializes in developing interim solutions to the Census Bureau's prison miscount for state, county, and municipal governments.



**Claire Guthrie Gastanaga** is Executive Director of the *American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia* since 2012, has a long career of advocacy and counseling services with government and nonprofits. She has argued cases before the US Supreme Court, served as counsel to the Democratic Caucus and Virginia Legislative Black Caucus during the redistricting process, and received numerous awards for her advocacy for justice and equality since earning a law degree from the University of Virginia in 2010.



**Areshini Pather** is the Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney in the City of Charlottesville where she prosecutes felony cases; specializing in violent crimes and sexual assaults. She has been a prosecutor since 2011. Prior to that she was a Supervising Assistant Public Defender at the Office of the Public Defender for the City of Richmond. Ms. Pather had been with the Richmond Office of the Public Defender since 2005. She earned both her law and undergraduate degrees from the University of Virginia. Ms. Pather is an active member of the Charlottesville Criminal Bar Association and the Charlottesville Sexual Assault Response Team. She is also a board member for the Charlottesville-Albemarle Family Treatment Court. Ms. Pather originally hails from Cape Town, South Africa.

# Launching the 2021 Elections!

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



Click here on [VOTE411](#) for personalized voting information.

We're ready to start another voting cycle in Virginia! The work of Voter Services is never on hold for very long! We have no town elections this year, and all town elections have been moved to November after legislation passed this year in the General Assembly. That affects Louisa, Mineral and Stanardsville in 2022.

Thanks to LWV CVA President, Pat Cochran, stepping up, we should have the LWVUS portal, VOTE411.org, up and running for all races in our league coverage area. Please let Pat know if you can help with this important endeavor. The State League has approved three questions for candidates that we will ask on VOTE411.

Dates to remember are:

**April 23 – Early voting begins for the 6/8 Primaries**

May 17 – Final day to **register** for 6/8/ Primaries

May 28 – Final day to apply for a mailed absentee ballot

June 5 - Final day to cast in-person absentee ballot

June 8 – Democratic Primary for State Constitutional Officers and local races

September 18 - Early voting begins for the 11/2 general election

October 11 – Final day to **register** for the 11/2 general election

October 22 – Final day to apply for a mailed absentee ballot

October 30 – Final day to cast in-person absentee ballot

November 2 – General Election for State Constitutional officers, House of Delegates, and local races.

We can still participate in the Governor's Challenge for student registration – please contact Sue Lewis, LWV CVA Voter Services Director (email: [swlcvlle@gmail.com](mailto:swlcvlle@gmail.com)) if you are interested. The General Assembly passed and the Governor signed several bills that kept the election day improvements for voters in place for subsequent elections, including no-excuse absentee voting and drop-boxes. The no-witness requirement for an absentee mail-in ballot is in place for the June election only. You can check these updates by going to the Virginia Department of Elections website: <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/>

## **LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Committee News**

**By Gerry Kruger**

The International Relations/Federal Government Committee will focus on women heads of government during March through June. March is Women's History Month, so this emphasis begins at an appropriate time. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, **Natalie Testa** followed up on the ongoing saga of Aung San Suu Kyi, who spent 15 years in detention before becoming State Counselor of Myanmar (aka Burma), the equivalent of Prime Minister.

Suu Kyi had advocated non-violence and received the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to promote peace and fair treatment. Once in office, however, she was accused of silence concerning the military's brutal persecution of the indigenous Rohingya people.

On February 1, 1921, the military leaders arrested her along with her top lieutenants. The first reason given for her arrest was voter fraud. Immediately University students led protests and doctors went on strike. 150 of those doctors were arrested, and the media and Internet were shut down. When news of the protest reached newspapers worldwide, the military beat, tortured, and killed protesters. One side was completely unarmed, and the other was heavily armed. Thousands have been tortured and injured. The army now refers to Myanmar as a "disciplined democracy." They're shooting to kill. There is no longer civil power, only military power.

For the past six years, Su Kyi backed the military's actions. Last year she testified that the Rohingya were shipped out of the country for their own protection. In reality, they were removed so they couldn't vote. Now that she is 75 and not well, there is hardly anyone left to help her.

Meanwhile the country is suffering economically, and there are no imports. The people have no food, and the UN has sanctioned them. The leaders are quoted as saying, "We're used to sanctions. We will work with few friends." Natalie promises to keep us informed about this situation. Due to the government's shutdown of media and the Internet, little news escapes.

**Marge Cox's** report was on Katrin Jakobsdottir, the Prime Minister of Iceland. Iceland is a country of 350,000 people and 40,000 square miles. It is volcanically and geologically active with 100's of volcanos, 30 of which are active. First settled in 874 A.D., it subsisted on fishing for years and later grew into an important fishing industry. The Parliament was founded in 930 A.D.

Serving four years as Prime Minister, Jakobsdottir is a member of the Left-Green Movement party and was the first woman Vice-President. She has also been chair of a number of other political groups. In the four years since being appointed as Prime Minister, she has focused on Sustainable Development Goals:

- Carbon neutrality by 2040
- Community health—making it easier to walk, bike, and eat healthy foods

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## **LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Committee News**

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Iceland has a good public health system, and Jakobsdottir promotes listening to scientists advice rather than to politicians regarding the pandemic. From the beginning, every case of Covid was contact traced, and there only been 10 deaths from this disease.

Join our next Zoom meeting on April 21 at 10:00 am as we continue our examination of women leaders. Contact Marge Cox for the link: [margevfcox@gmail.com](mailto:margevfcox@gmail.com) . (We hope to hold an "In-person" meeting in May.)

## **LWV CVA Child Care Committee Report by Beth Kariel**

As the United States has begun to re-open, more attention is being given to the economic implication of the child care crisis. The crisis, which existed before the pandemic, has worsened during the pandemic. There is concern that the severity of the child care shortage may hinder economic recovery in the U.S. Staffing shortages continue to be a problem, as it is hard to attract people to work in child care, due to low pay and poor working conditions.

There have been significant federal relief funds given to the child care industry because of the pandemic but experts say that without sustained federal investment in the child care industry, there will not be enough improvement. There is much debate about what kinds of policy changes should be implemented. Child Care policies of other countries are being looked at. While some policy makers are advocating for a continuum of services to help children and families, others argue against the "nanny state".

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](mailto:bethkariel9@gmail.com)

## **Welcome New Members!**

Margaret Eldridge  
2448 Holkham Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22901  
[eldridgemar@gmail.com](mailto:eldridgemar@gmail.com)  
571-232-2939

Melanie Arthur  
4475 Wesley Chapel Rd  
Free Union, VA 22940  
[melanierosearthur@gmail.com](mailto:melanierosearthur@gmail.com)  
434-319-8891

## LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Report by Muriel Grim

At the March 26 meeting of the Natural Resources Committee we learned that, on its website, Albemarle County has contact information for anyone who wants to report safety issues along trails or non-compliance with rules to prevent runoff carrying sediment from construction sites. We were not aware of that and decided to find ways to publicize this county mechanism for reporting safety and non-compliance issues.

The March meeting of the Comprehensive Plan study group ("Book Club") also was held on March 26. Elaine Echols, who spent 22 years as a Planner for Albemarle County, led our very informative discussion of Chapter 8, The Development Areas. Committee members will communicate via email to make plans for the Comprehensive Plan Book Club April meeting.

We discussed having a presentation by the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) to the Natural Resources Committee but decided that because the CCL is working for national policies the presentation should be to a wider audience. We now plan to check with the LWV-VA Environment Issue Group and hope to hold a CCL meeting that will be open to statewide LWV members who have an interest in climate change policies.

The next meeting of the NRC will be Tuesday, April 27 at 1 pm. For more information about the LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee, please email Muriel Grim, msgrim2012@gmail.com

### 2021 LWV CVA Annual Meeting to be held as a Virtual Meeting

**May 2, 2021  
2 – 4 pm**

Dear LWV CVA Members: We look forward to holding our 2021 LWV CVA Annual Meeting as a virtual event on Sunday, May 2, from 2 to 4 pm. Guest speakers, Julia Tanner, LWV-VA Action Coordinator, and Janet Boyd, LWV-VA Director of Voter Services, will enlighten us with a review of legislation passed in the 2021 Virginia General Assembly. Following their presentations, we will hold the League's Annual Business Meeting. **You will receive the 2021 Annual Meeting Packet by mail at least two weeks before May 2.** The Annual Packet contains the Business Meeting Action Agenda of items membership will vote on May 2.

Look for the Eventbrite registration in your inbox in the coming weeks to join in this important member meeting. **We need your participation to ensure the multi-faceted ongoing work of our local League of Women Voters.**

*Thank you, Pat Cochran, LWV CVA President.*



Dear Friends and Members of the **League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area**,  
We take this opportunity to thank you who have donated through our 2021 Finance Drive.  
Your donations show that you value what the League does – encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Sincerely,

Pat Cochran, LWV CVA President and Kerin Yates, 2021 Finance Drive Chair

**2021 Fund Drive Donors as of March 12, 2021**

(\* Denotes Early Bird Donation)

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

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Fri., April 9, 11 am	LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Kit Murphy McNally, email: <a href="mailto:murphymcnally@gmail.com">murphymcnally@gmail.com</a>
Sun., April 18, 2 – 4 pm	<b>LWV CVA Sunday Seminar: Women and Prison: A Problem NOT a Solution</b>	Virtual Meeting	Click on this ticket link to register for the zoom meeting: <b>tickets</b>
Wed., April 21, 10 am	LWV CVA International Relations/ Federal Gov't Meeting	Virtual Meeting	Contact Marge Cox, 245-5228, or email <a href="mailto:margevfcox@gmail.com">margevfcox@gmail.com</a> for zoom link
Wed., April 21, <b>3:00 – 5:00 pm</b>	LWV CVA Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Pat Cochran, 434-326-7873
Fri., April 27, 1 pm	LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Muriel Grim, email: <a href="mailto:msggrim2012@gmail.com">msggrim2012@gmail.com</a>
Sun., May 2, 2 – 4 pm	<b>LWV CVA 2021 Annual Meeting</b>	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Pat Cochran, 434-326-7873

### It's easy to make a donation to our local League!

Democracy is not a spectator sport! If you missed this year's annual fund-raising letter, you can still make a donation. Your gift will enable us to fulfill our mission of educating our citizens to actively participate in understanding and influencing public policy. Want to make sure 100% of your donation goes to us? First, specify your donation:

**LWV CVA Education Fund:** donations are tax deductible.

**OR**

**LWV CVA Operating Fund:** donations are NOT tax deductible.

And send your check to: Anne Claar, Treasurer, 3 Stigger Rd., Palmyra, VA 22963

Or if you prefer to use your credit card, go online to our website: [lwv-cva.org](http://lwv-cva.org) - scroll down to the bottom of the homepage and click on the "Donate" button.



**LWV CVA**  
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