

LWV CVA Concurrence Meeting

Zoom Meeting: Sunday, January 16, 2022 – 2 pm – 4 pm

To join, click on:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85827644530?pwd=R05qYnQxS2NlVnlQdVh5cGMrRHUvUT09>

Restudy: Education – Local Position – 2021-22

Concurrence: Agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by a small group of members or by another League.

Proposed updates based on restudy of the LWV CVA Education Position:

- (1) Support for cost-effective secure high speed internet access throughout the Charlottesville Area.**
- (2) Support for curriculum and programs that enable students to critically evaluate information found on the internet and in other media including skills to understand individual rights and privacy.**

Questions for membership:

- (1) How do the *Virginia Standards of Learning for K-12* support computer science curriculum in the classroom? How are these Standards related to the Standards for other major areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Reading?
- (2) What expectations are already in place as a result of the Standards of Learning that enable students to critically evaluate information found on the internet and in other media including skills to understand individual rights and privacy? Why should the LWV CVA support these curriculum and programs?
- (3) Does LWV CVA have adequate evidence from investigating access to high-speed internet in the Charlottesville Area to show support for cost-effective secure high speed internet access in area public schools?

The following pages of this January 2022 newsletter contain excerpts from the Education Study Report (2021-22). For the complete report by the Education Study group including “Study Research and Support” and “Position Update Conclusion” along with Appendices A through E and a Bibliography of materials used may be found on our website: lwv-cva.org. Pull down menu “**Explore the League**” and scroll down to **Local Positions**. The report can be accessed under “Education”.

Restudy: Education – Local Position – 2021-22

Background

In 2020, at the Annual Meeting of the *League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area*, members voted to support a restudy of the Education position found in “Local Program: Positioned for Action” to include the need for “increased internet access and cyber education in schools.” Membership extended this proposed study at the 2021 Annual Meeting. In July, 2021, a study group was formed with LWV CVA members Michele Kellermann and Carolyn Fitzpatrick to lead the effort. It was suggested the following statements (1) and (2) be inserted into the present position so that our League could address these issues locally. Below are the two statements with some background information as to why they are each important additions to our present position.

(1) Support for cost-effective secure high speed internet access throughout the Charlottesville Area.

In the spring of 2020, with the pandemic closing down in-person student learning at all local public school systems in the Charlottesville Area (Charlottesville City, and the counties of Albemarle, Greene, Fluvanna, Nelson, and Louisa), the necessity of providing virtual learning became immediate and was met by state [“HB 1923 Broadband capacity; expands existing pilot program, municipal broadband authorities” – see Appendix A of this report] and local governments with increased broadband access so that students could continue their education virtually particularly in rural areas. Even small, rural county public school systems such as Louisa maintained “Help Desks” with “emergency” phone numbers so that students and families could receive immediate technology help

[<https://sites.google.com/lcps.k12.va.us/lcps-technology-help-pages/home>].

Thus, one positive outcome of the school closures of 2020-21 was that the need for internet access became universal to student learning with local school systems providing the resources so that students could continue to learn online. In fact, several school systems gave options to parents to enroll their students as full-time virtual students for the 2021-22 school year even when schools were now open for in-person instruction. Area examples include: (1) Albemarle County Public Schools

[<https://www.k12albemarle.org/our-schools/virtual-campus>]; (2) Charlottesville City Schools

[<http://charlottesvilleschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Approved-2021-2022-Program-of-Study-1-7-2021-2.pdf>]; and (3) Nelson County Public Schools

[<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xt5Xr0YjgJGjTf4beORTsR0gPjvdpbls/view>].

On December 14, 2021, it was announced that “A planned regional broadband project that will provide residents in 13 Central Virginia counties with access to fiber broadband service will received \$79 million in federal and state funding. [https://dailyprogress.com/news/local/79-million-grant-will-help-expand-broadband-in-13-central-virginia-counties/article_2d800222-5c70-11ec-a5f3-a336ca96caad.html]

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- (2) Support for curriculum and programs that enable students to critically evaluate information found on the internet and in other media including skills to understand individual rights and privacy.**

Along with providing virtual learning, school systems were faced with the necessity of providing students with the critical thinking skills to “evaluate information found on the internet and in other media including skills to understand individual rights and privacy.”

This issue has been discussed broadly on several internet sites. A Google search of “critical evaluation of information found on the internet and other media” cites the acronym RADAR: RADAR stands for

Relevance - How is this information relevant to your assignment?

Authority - Who is the author? What makes this person or organization an authoritative source?

Date - When was this information published and is the publication date important to you?

Appearance - Does the information look professional or academic? Does it have citations and references?

Reason for writing - Why did the author publish this information?

[Adapted from [Mandalios, J. \(2013\). RADAR: An approach for helping students evaluate Internet sources. Journal of Information Science, 39\(4\), 470-478.](#)]

Note: The internet search also includes this often referenced RADAR checklist, from the Robert E Kennedy Library, Foundational Experiences Program: <https://lib.calpoly.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Evaluating-Credibility-Fall-2017.pdf>

As part of the critical thinking skills needed to evaluate information found on the internet, students also must be supported with skills to understanding individual rights and privacy. To this end, the following definition of “online privacy” provides an explanation:

What is the definition of online privacy?

The definition of online privacy is the level of [privacy](#) protection an individual has while connected to the Internet. It covers the amount of online security available for personal and [financial data](#), [communications](#), and preferences. Internet users often attempt to increase online privacy through anti-virus software, strong password choices, turning off tracking, reviewing site security, and opting for stricter privacy settings. Risks to online privacy range from phishing scams to malware, while problems with website security may result in identity theft. From: <https://www.winston.com/en/legal-glossary/online-privacy.html>

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Proposed Update to the LWV CVA Local Position on Education

The restudy group proposes the following updates [in bold] for concurrence by LWV CVA members as follows:

Education

Action: Support of equal access to a quality public educational system from pre-kindergarten through high school with adequate funding, competent personnel, well-maintained facilities, and adequate resources and supplies. Support of specified statements to assure quality education, particularly addressing the needs of diverse student populations in the Charlottesville Area school systems, including the City of Charlottesville, and the Counties of Albemarle, and Fluvanna, Nelson, Louisa, and Greene. Support for local policies that promote learning by recognizing that the basic needs of all children include health care and adequate nutrition. Support and funding for pre-kindergarten programs and full-day kindergarten programs for all students. Support for curriculum and programs that prepare students for a 21st century workforce by providing emphasis on scientific, technological, engineering, and mathematical skills. **Support for curriculum and programs that enable students to critically evaluate information found on the internet and in other media including skills to understand individual rights and privacy.** Support of all aspects of community education. Support of specific ways to attract and retain quality classroom teachers and to encourage excellence in teaching. Continued monitoring of local school systems, with special emphasis on expenditures and funding sources, education and extracurricular programs, salaries, and responsibilities, and citizen involvement. Special attention to potential major changes in local school systems. [2013] **Support for cost-effective secure high speed internet access throughout the Charlottesville Area.** [2022]

All LWV CVA members are invited to a Concurrence meeting to be held on Sunday, January 16, 2 – 4 pm, as a Zoom Meeting with this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85827644530?pwd=R05qYnQxS2NlVnlQdVlk5cGMrRHUvUT09>

The complete report by the Education Study group including “Study Research and Support” and “Position Update Conclusion” along with Appendices A through E may be found on our website: lwv-cva.org. Pull down menu “Explore the League” and scroll down to Local Positions. The report can be accessed under “Education”.

For more information about the study and the upcoming Concurrence meeting, contact Michele Kellermann, email: michele.kellermann@gmail.com.

2021-22 LWV CVA Program Planning Update: On December 4, 2021, an in-person Program Planning Meeting was held at the Brooks Family YMCA with 20 LWV CVA members participating. Under review at this meeting were **Local Program and National Program** in preparation for member approval at the 2022 LWV CVA Annual Business Meeting (May 12, 2022) and the LWV-US Convention in June.

On December 15, 2021, the LWV CVA Board reviewed a Draft Report of the December 4 meeting at its monthly Board meeting. Carol Cutler, LWV CVA vice-president, who presided over the December 4 meeting has prepared the report for review by members—see page 6-7 of this newsletter. We will continue to use the coming weeks to prepare the final draft of this report for members to review for consideration at the Annual Business Meeting on May 12, 2022. Carol will prepare the official feedback form from the US League to submit our National Programs report.

LWV CVA Members Present at 12.4.21 Program Planning: Carol Cutler (chair), Lois Sandy, Frances Schutz, Rita Squillace, Ginny DeSimone, Gerry Kruger, Kerin Yates, Muriel Grim, Beth Kariel, Shirley Payne, Kobby Hoffman, Stephanie Lowenhaupt, Bobbie Williams, Lisa Hilgartner, Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Kit Murphy McNally, Jane Eggleton, Rice Sumner Wagner, Michele Kellermann, Mimi Bender

LWV CVA Members Present at 12.15.21 Board meeting: Pat Cochran, Carol Cutler, Michele Kellermann, Carolyn Fitzpatrick, Beth Kariel, Muriel Grim, Beth Alley, Lisa Hilgartner, Kit Murphy McNally, Kerin Yates, Melanie Arthur, Rosalie Simari



20 Leaguers gathered at the Brooks Family YMCA Charlottesville Community Room for the December 4 2021-22 Program Planning meeting.



LWV-CVA Program Planning for 2021-22 - Checksheet for Local Program

LWV-CVA Local Program	Retain	Update	Take Action	Delete	COMMENTS
Government:					
Intergovernmental Cooperation		X			Include reference to all LWV-CVA counties, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson as well as Charlottesville and Albemarle County-UVA cooperation
Tax System	X				
Magisterial Districts		X			Include reference to all LWV-CVA counties, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson besides Albemarle
Redistricting	X				
Election Integrity		X			Adding words "integrity" as a broader term than vulnerabilities and "assuring accuracy" in our voting system rather than making our voting system accurate – see page 7.
Transportation	X				
Natural Resources:					
Climate Change	X				
Energy	X				
Land Use	X				
Water	X				
Waste Management	X				
Social Policy:					
Child Care	X				
Education		X			Update based on restudy on available internet access and cybersecurity teaching in area public schools to be presented at concurrence meeting Jan 16, 2022
Gun Violence Prevention	X				
Health and Family Life Education and Health Services in Area Public Schools		X			Update and restudy in progress related to behavioral health support in area public schools – see page 7
Housing		X			Review in relation to environmental impact
Regional Library System	X				

1. Is there a **new study** (one only) on a **local issue** you would suggest? Describe issue and give scope for the study. List volunteers willing to work on the study. Health Care in the LWV-CVA Community as consistent with the LWVUS position on Health Care (Impact on Issues, pp. 128-133) Volunteers: Stephanie Lowenhaupt, Janet Eggleton, Kobby Hoffman, Bobby Williams
2. Is there an **update** (restudy) of a **current position** (one only) you would suggest? List reason for restudy and define scope. Also **give volunteers willing to work on the update.** Intergovernmental Cooperation and Magisterial Districts positions – inclusion of Charlottesville area counties
3. Is there a position you want to **delete**? Explain why you think the position is no longer needed or valid. None
4. Is there a LWV-CVA position you think needs to be emphasized for **action**? Gun violence prevention, affordable housing, election integrity, health promotion

2021-22 Program Planning - Comments

Restudy on Health and Family Life Education and Health Services in Area Public Schools

By Mimi Bender, Study Chair

The local program for 2021-22 includes a restudy on Health and Family Life Education and Health Services in Area Public Schools, to consider amendments to the current position, which was adopted in 2013. The restudy is focused on how behavioral health matters are handled in the schools; training for school personnel in recognizing crisis behavior; and the adequacy of the FLE curriculum to address positive coping skills, resilience and suicide prevention.

The restudy committee has compiled a considerable amount of information regarding state requirements and policies affecting the handling of behavioral health and FLE as well as behavioral health issues, personnel and training in school division localities in the LWV CVA jurisdictions. It plans to continue its interviews with school division personnel and other data gathering in as timely a way as possible. During the past months, we have deferred some of our work so that we would not impose on student services and instructional personnel as they deal with the covid pandemic, its impacts on students and teachers, and the shifts from in-school to virtual teaching and back to in-school programs. We anticipate that we will be able to complete the restudy early in 2022 and will prepare our report and recommendations for the Board at that time.

Local Program Report Comments: LWV CVA Updated Government Position

With the passing of the LWVVA 2021 update at 2021 Convention on **Election Laws**, it is suggested that our 2021-22 LWV CVA *Positioned for Action* statement reflect our adherence with the state position. This was reviewed and updated by a Program Planning subcommittee (Carol Cutler, Shirley Payne, and Karen Christensen) in the summer of 2021. Lisa Gerchick, one of the developers of the state study and position update, was consulted on the wording that is in exact keeping with the state position. Carolyn Caywood, LWV-VA Program Director, was consulted about how we proceed in adding the state update to our local position, and at the LWV CVA Program Planning meeting on December 4, 2021, it was suggested to present the changes to the LWV CVA **Government** position at the next planned concurrence meeting (January 16, 2022). Here is the background to the edits and suggested changes:

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Local Program Report Comments: LWV CVA Updated Government Position

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At the LWV CVA Program Planning meeting on December 4, 2021, in reviewing Election Integrity, Shirley Payne proposed striking the word “vulnerabilities” and replacing it with “integrity” and using “assuring accuracy” rather than “making our voter systems accurate.” She writes, “My reason for suggesting these edits is my concern that our current position wording could give the impression that our League considers our local election systems inherently vulnerable and our voting systems inaccurate. The edits set a more positive tone, while still allowing us to raise red flags should we learn of actual vulnerabilities and inaccuracies. These adjustments, slight though they are, seem important given the increasing election fraud propaganda in circulation today. After my close reading of the Virginia League’s election laws position, I feel the proposed edits reflect it well.” The wording of the updated **Election Integrity** (LWV CVA Positioned for Action) under **Government** section would now read:

Election Integrity

Action: Adhering to the LWV-VA Positions under the heading “Government” relating to Election Laws, support public education on the integrity of our local election system and the potential for disruptive disinformation campaigns or voter suppression, and work with others, such as local registrars, in assuring accuracy in our voting systems.

Support voting measures that enhance voter access and voter participation such as no requirement for a witness with absentee ballots or to show a photo ID at a voting location; and advocate for secure drop off locations with drop box locks or seals, and staffing locations with manned and/or video camera surveillance.

Support for voting precincts of the Charlottesville area having sufficient resources to implement cyber security practices and state certification of all election equipment such as electronic pollbooks, ballot scanners and secure transfer of tabulation data.

Support transparency, security, and accountability in local post-election audits and risk-limiting audits which follow best practices and are done using state standards.

Support dissemination of local voting information by public announcements and offering nonpartisan candidate forums.

Support use of auditable, recountable voter verified paper ballots marked by hand or, for voters with disabilities, the use of a ballot marking device that produces a paper or card ballot.

Electoral Systems

Action: Adhering to the LWV-VA position under the heading of “Government” relating to Election Laws, support the method (or system) of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) , which allows all candidates to be ranked, for local elections including citizen education on RCV.

Program Planning: 2022 LWV-US Report Form

At the LWV CVA Program Planning meeting on December 4, 2021, members considered LWV-US positions using the following form which is due to the national League on March 1, 2022:

1. Do you support the proposed program focus, continuing the Campaign for Making Democracy Work ® (which includes Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Redistricting, and Money in Politics? (Yes/No). **Yes**
2. Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of the Campaign for Making Democracy Work ®? (Yes/No) Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing the scope of your recommendation, including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission as well as resources needed to carry out the recommendation.

Yes. Under LWVUS, Social Policy, Tax System: (See pages 9-10 of this newsletter on "Prefilled US Tax Return."

3. Which areas of the 2020-2022 national program priorities (Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Money in Politics, Redistricting) within the *Campaign for Making Democracy Work* ® has your League worked on during the current biennium? Select all that apply.

Voting Rights, Improving Elections, Redistricting

4. Which LWVUS Positions does your League use to act at the state and local level? Please check all that apply. LWVUS Positions:

✓ **Citizen's Right to Vote**
✓ **Redistricting**
✓ **Voter Representation/Electoral Systems**
✓ **Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation**
✓ **Constitutional Amendment Proposals**
✓ **Individual Liberties**
✓ **Natural Resources**
✓ **Resource Management**
✓ **Air Quality**
✓ **Solid Waste**
✓ **Climate Change**
✓ **Water Resources**
✓ **Public Participation**

✓ **Agriculture Policies**
✓ **Fair Housing**
✓ **Equal Rights for Women**
✓ **Education**
✓ **Fiscal Policy**
✓ **Health Care**
✓ **Meeting Basic Human Needs**
✓ **Housing Supply**
✓ **Child Care**
✓ **Violence Prevention**
✓ **Gun Policy**
✓ **Sentencing Policy**

LWV-CVA Proposal – to advocate for IRS Pre-filled 1040 Income Tax Form to tax payers for federal income tax purposes.

LWV-US Position Synopsis (under Social Policy, **Fiscal Policy**, pp. 125-126, “Impact on Issues”) Tax System

“The federal tax system should be fair and equitable, understandable to the taxpayer and encourage compliance, and accomplish its objectives without creating undue administrative problems. The League supports income tax as the major tax base of federal revenue.”

League response to Tax System Reform in the past has focused on tax policy, deficit issues, and entitlement funding. In 2015, the latest updated position, the League lobbied for the support of principles and programs that benefit low-income Americans while opposing tax breaks for the wealthiest in the country.

Further LWVUS Guidelines show support for tax measures that broaden the base and improve the equity of the income tax system.

LWV-VA Fiscal Policy Position

LWVVA supports responsible state fiscal policies that include a flexible and diverse tax structure that is based on a progressive income tax; continuous evaluation of all programs for need, effectiveness, efficiency, and economy; flexibility in developing local sources of revenue; state commitment to funding of state-mandated programs; and opposition to constitutional or statutory limits on state/local government spending or revenue sources.

LWV CVA Tax System (under **Government** position)

Action: Support of a fair and flexible tax system necessary for responsive government, using the following criteria in evaluating taxation proposals and/or reform measures: equity, including the ability to pay and benefits received; consistency with social and economic goals of the community and the LWV; efficiency of administration, including computation, payment and collection methods, and public understanding; adequacy of revenue, including ability to adjust to changes in economic conditions.

Summary: LWVUS, LWVVA, LWV-CVA positions have not addressed a change in IRS interaction with the taxpayer that would show what has already been reported to the IRS by pre-filling the IRS 1040A tax form, simplifying return filings for all taxpayers.

By pre-filling the IRS1040 A form with taxable income reported to the IRS via forms W-2 and 1099 the taxpayer can check this against his W-2 and 1099 forms received from employers and other institutions that withhold taxes- such as bank accounts, contracted work, dividends from stocks and bonds.

Why the need for this? Convenience is first and foremost. The “pre-fill” takes the guess work out of what is owed. Most auditing of returns comes from underreporting of income. Underreporting is a red flag for auditors. It results in payment of taxes owed and often with a penalty.

Who benefits by this change? The working poor who often have multiple jobs or short term jobs or work in the gig economy with a host of 1099s and W-2s. These taxpayers are most impacted from audits. They can least afford to take time off from work to address the audit, and to pay the penalty for under reporting. Wealthier tax payers can afford tax attorneys and their own CPAs to handle audits and are more able to pay the costs and penalties incurred. This position revised would reflect our commitment to consideration for diversity and equity.

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LWV-CVA Proposal – to advocate for IRS Pre-filled 1040 Income Tax Form to tax payers for federal income tax purposes.

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Taking the guesswork out of filing could and should result in less auditing in general, leaving the IRS more auditor/agent hours to focus on the true tax cheats.

The cost to do this would not be significant since the IRS already reports income to the Social Security Administration for FICA wages.

This proposal is not new. It is already being done in 36 countries around the world including Germany and Japan. It has been piloted on a state basis in 2005 and was found to be overwhelmingly popular with taxpayers.

If it's that good why hasn't it been incorporated in the tax code? Who has the most to lose if this becomes the operating procedure. In the past the opposition has been from CPAs and tax preparing companies who do not wish to jeopardize their customer base and fear that it will cause them to lose business. They thought the same when e-filing started and yet they adjusted.

With LWV-CVA, LWVVA, and LWVUS support for this measure the public could be made aware of having a prefilled return possible. This non-partisan issue does not require complicated legislation but it does require the will of the public.

Pre-filled US Tax Return – Suggested Position

Action: Support for a Prefilled Federal Tax Return. Making the IRS more transparent in what it already has reported to it as taxable income via W-2s and 1099 forms is the goal for this proposal. Its aim is to aid taxpayers by making it quick and easy to file, knowing how much they owe or should receive once the return is filed and processed. By doing this the IRS will not only be of assistance to all who file federal tax returns and subsequently their state tax returns because its revenue is derived from what has been filed by the taxpayer.

Most IRS audits are for underreporting of income. The majority of those caught up in this are the working poor and middle class. These taxpayers are far more likely to have multiple jobs or contract work. They may have multiple short term jobs and keeping up with all that requires a lot of time and energy. These taxpayers are far more likely to not have CPAs or tax preparers to help them. With this change IRS can use less of their time going after the "little guys" and spend their time and energy on the true tax cheats.

References: Pre-filled Tax Returns Could Save Taxpayers Time and Money

<https://www.marketplace.org/2020/11/11/tax-reform-compliance-costs-pre-filled-tax-forms-return-free-filing/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/taxanalysts/2016/04/20/elizabeth-warren-is-right-about-pre-filled-tax-returns/?sh=24d72ace8d4f>



The League of Women Voters of Virginia –
WLRT – Women’s Legislative Roundtable
2022 Schedule of Meetings

Women’s Legislative Roundtables (WLRTs) are weekly deep dives into our legislative priorities. The 2022 Legislative Session runs Jan. 12- March 12. WLRTs are held each Wednesday during the session. This year, you can attend in person – at the Tidewater Room of the SunTrust Center, 919 East Main Street, Richmond – or log in to view virtually! **League Day, January 26, will also be a hybrid event.**

Local League presidents will be setting up meetings with members of the General Assembly for League Day. Contact your local League president to join one of these meetings. When you RSVP you will have a choice to mark how you will attend. We hope to see you in whatever form is easiest for you but an in-person visit makes the biggest impact!

Click [here](#) to register.

Here is our schedule of topics:

Jan 12 – Automatic Restoration of Returning Citizens Voting Rights

Jan 19 - Absentee Ballots Witness Requirement Removal

Jan 26 – League Day (Save the date!)

Feb 2 – Vouchers and Tuition Tax Credits to Private Schools; “Portability of Funds diverted from Public Schools to Private Schools”.

Feb 9 – Child Protection

Feb 16 – Money in Politics – Reform

Feb 23 – Dark Money – Honest Ads

Mar 2 – Floods – Full Disclosure of Flood Zones

Mar 9 – Final Legislative Push

LWV CVA Educational Outreach Project – Report by Beth Alley

Time and time again, the topic of educational outreach for children has come up in League discussion groups and board meetings. With this in mind, several of us started to meet informally to identify ways that we might work on this project. We realized that while there exists a great deal of literature on the process of voting for children of all reading abilities, there does not appear to be much readily available for children about the League of Women Voters, and our century old efforts to encourage voting. Wishing to remedy this situation, we tapped into some of the talents of our members and eventually decided we would write our own children's book. We got tremendous input from Carolyn Fitzpatrick and Diane Inman who did a similar project for the DAR. Meg Heubeck and Kerin Yates helped with examples of existing materials. We got additional input from a host of others, but Gerry Kruger really took the project to a new level by writing an amazing draft copy of a picture book that tells the story from the point of view of two 4th graders of different backgrounds that meet in a park. They discuss the importance of voting and some of the historical women of all cultures who helped in this fight. We are thankful to Carol Cutler for her editing skills and the enthusiasm of all our project team.

This has evolved into a really fun project and it is our intention to publish our book *That's Not Fair* and eventually distribute it to local elementary schools. We also are hoping that we might share the outcome of this project with other Leagues across the country.

Our team plans to resume meeting (hopefully in person) on Thursday, **January 27 at 3:00 pm at Gerry's house (989 Allendale Drive**. Charlottesville; phone: 434-977-7617). We will need to finish editing, look at different illustrators, talk with publishing experts, and continue working on all other aspects of this project.

In the meantime, Gerry and I met with Mary Coleman, from "A City of Promise" and learned a bit about a similar project that they just completed. The book they published is *A Promise to Grow* and if you have not seen it, we strongly recommend it. It talks about Charlottesville's Vinegar Hill area and the legacy that led to the creation of the Westhaven community. It is intended as a bridge between the racial communities so that we might all go forward. It is an excellent book for all Charlottesville residents. If you are interested in learning more about this book, please go to www.cityofpromise.org.

Our Educational Outreach Project is open to all and if you think you might be interested in being part of this group please reach out to Gerry Kruger (email: gerrykruger@embargo.com) or Beth Alley (email: beth.alley@gmail.com). We would love to have you join us.

LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Government Meetings for 2022: Marge Cox, committee chair emails: "Due to the continued uncertainty regarding the Omicron strain, the IR/FG Committee will postpone in-home meetings until April." For information about this committee, contact Marge at 434-245-5228.

LWV CVA Gun Violence Prevention Committee Report

By Maggie Hoover and Beth Alley

On December 11, League members Beth Alley, Judy Freeman, Debbie Garth, Maggie Hoover, Beth Kariel, Lois Sandy and Frances Schutz joined the Charlottesville Coalition for Gun Violence Prevention on the Downtown Mall for their 9th annual vigil to remember the victims of mass shootings. The vigil was started nine years ago to honor the 20 first graders and their six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School who tragically lost their lives in a school shooting, just days prior to Christmas.

At the vigil a bell was rung as participants read the names of the location for numerous additional mass shootings that have occurred in the convening years. Sandy Hook Elementary School, Columbine High School, Mother Emmanuel Church, Virginia Tech, Tree of Life Synagogue, El Paso Walmart, Virginia Beach Courthouse, Marjorie Stoneman Douglass High School, Las Vegas Concert, Pulse NightClub and most recently the killing of four students at Oxford High School in Michigan. The group also drew attention to the recent victims of gun violence here at home in Charlottesville including a child killed in his Charlottesville home by gun violence.

In the nine years since the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting more than 900,000 Americans have been killed or injured by guns in America. Below is a poster collage of the Sandy Hook children and their teachers who were tragically killed.



LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting

By Muriel Grim, chair, LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee

The Natural Resources Committee meeting was held virtually on November 30, 2021. Scott Clark, a Senior Planner from the Albemarle County Community Development Department, told us about permitting for utility scale solar power generation sites. Currently they are permitted as a special use which requires that conditions be met. Because each potential solar farm site has its own issues, conditions can be applied that control any health, safety, or environmental problems that could arise at a particular site. Special use permits are also subject to review for being in accord with the comprehensive plan. County staff is keeping up with solar farm challenges and regulations in other areas outside the county and the state. We are planning to have as the topic for our February Sunday Seminar the sources of our electricity and what is needed to make sure solar energy generation is environmentally safe.

The Albemarle County staff has begun work on the updates to the comprehensive plan. It is time for the LWV CVA to compile our recommendations for changes or additions to the plan. If you have any suggestions for updates to the comprehensive plan, please email them now to msggrim2012@gmail.com.

LWV CVA Child Care Committee News

By Beth Kariel, chair, LWV CVA Child Care Committee

The “LWV-VA Child Care Issue Group” has been our focus recently. Beth Kariel and Rita Squillace have completed interviews for our area for the initial phase of the state child care study. During the General Assembly, the issue group will be following bills related to child care and suggesting advocacy when applicable.

The state child care issue group had a guest speaker at their November meeting, Emily Griffey, Chief Policy Officer at "Voices for Virginia's Children". Ms. Griffey explained that child care generally is unstable because it hasn't had a lot of public support and that currently staffing shortages are the biggest challenge. She also described two federal pieces of legislation: the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the Build Back Better Act (BBB). She described the Virginia bill that was passed last year that enabled more children to be eligible for child care subsidies. She gave us names of Virginia legislators who are interested in child care.

For information about the LWV CVA Child Care Committee, please contact Beth Kariel, email: bethkariel9@gmail.com

LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee Meeting: “Alternatives to Incarceration”

From Kit Murphy McNally, chair, LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee

The Justice Reform Committee will meet by zoom on **Friday, January 14, at 11 am to noon**. Topic: “Alternatives to incarceration. Considering initiatives at the Front and Back End of Sentences.” For more information, contact committee chair, Kit Murphy McNally, email: murphymcnally@gmail.com

“In Memoriam” – Bob Button

Sadly we note the passing on December 23 of Robert (“Bob”) Button, who along with his wife Nancy (president of our League, 2004-08), contributed so much to our local League as editors of the *Voter’s Guide* published yearly by the then *League of Women Voters of Charlottesville/Albemarle*. Bob’s invaluable editing expertise capped a career as a journalism teacher at Grosse Point South [Michigan] High School teacher “who shaped lives and trained generations of print and broadcast journalists.” A beautiful appreciation of his life as a teacher can be found at https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/wayne/2021/12/27/bob-button-grosse-pointe-south-high-school-journalism-teacher-obiuary-dies/9016001002/?fbclid=IwAR29wB_g3gPG7IfpOWM0e_a1fUEv0d5Hx_keQmwYspS2Zu_JjcJcWy46Tuk Leaguers here in Charlottesville will always remember that Bob had a twinkle in his eye. We extend our condolences to the Button family.

Meetings and Events for January 2022: *Mark Your Calendars Now!*

Date/Time	Event	Place	Contact
Wednesdays, Jan 12, 19 and 26	WLRT – LWV VA: League Day is January 26	Hybrid: virtual and in person in Richmond	For complete information and registration, go to: https://lww-va.org
Fri., Jan 14, 11 am to Noon	LWV CVA Justice Reform Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Kit Murphy McNally, email: murphymcnally@gmail.com
Sun., Jan 16, 2 – 4 pm	LWV CVA Concurrence Meeting– Restudy: <u>Education Local Position – 2021-22</u>	Zoom meeting – see front page for link	For further information, contact Carol Cutler, 434-293-2463
Wed., Jan 19, 3:00 – 5:00 pm	LWV CVA Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Pat Cochran, 434-326-7873
Tues., Jan 25, 1 pm	LWV CVA Natural Resources Committee Meeting	Virtual Meeting	For further information, contact Muriel Grim, email: msggrim2012@gmail.com
Thurs., Jan 27, 3 pm	LWV CVA Education Outreach Project: <i>That’s Not Fair</i>	Home of Gerry Kruger, 989 Allendale Drive	For further information, contact Gerry Kruger, 434-977-7617; or Beth Alley, 434-996-8075

LWV CVA 2022 Finance Drive “Party”

Saturday, January 22, 2022, 10:00 am to noon – CANCELLED

At the LWV CVA Board meeting on December 15, it was decided that we would have to cancel this event due to ongoing covid concerns about gatherings. We are grateful to Kerin Yates who will prepare the drive letter and to Pat Cochran who will take care of the mailing. If you would like to assist with either of these tasks, please contact President Pat Cochran: 434-326-7873.



LWV CVA President
Pat Cochran

Newsletter Editor
Michele Kellermann