

# October 2023 "eVoter"

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## ***LWV CVA Community Dialogue:***

*The League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area is proud to present a community dialogue open to the public to learn more about how the LWV CVA supports and defends democracy!*

## ***Elections 2023:***

### ***Local School Board Elections -***

### **WHY THEY MATTER!**

**Sunday, October 15, 2 - 4 pm**

**Central Library, Market Street, Charlottesville**

**Guest Speaker: J. Miles Coleman, Center for Politics, UVa**

Join the LWV CVA for our October Community Dialogue on **October 15 from 2-4 pm at Central Library, 201 East Market Street**, Charlottesville, Swanson Room--take the elevator to the third floor. Learn about upcoming legislative races in our region with the spotlight on local school board elections. Our guest is J. Miles Coleman from UVa's *Center for Politics*. Following Miles' talk we will discuss the role of school boards and how we can support education in our LWV CVA area--City of Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Nelson County, Fluvanna County, Greene County, Louisa County.

BRING A FRIEND--we hope to see you there!

For more information, contact LWV CVA President Meg Heubeck, at [lww@lww-cva.org](mailto:lww@lww-cva.org).

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## **What a Weekend! Democracy Day and Constitution Day Celebrations!**

**Saturday, September 16, 2023, at 2 pm**

**"Freedom Of Speech Wall" on the Downtown Mall, Charlottesville**

If you made it to the Downtown Mall on September 16, you probably caught a bit of the excitement generated by the double celebration of citizenship sponsored by the *Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club*. **Both Democracy Day and Constitution Day were recognized by citizens through calls to action, music, and fellowship.**

The *League of Women Voters* set up a registration, voter information table and also sold knitted hats that promoted voting. League President, Meg Heubeck, gave a speech on the responsibilities of citizenship and called on all Americans to take action to repair our republic. Musical interludes by Theocles, Jon Nafziger and the Green Grannies emphasized the theme of civic engagement and Ulysses S. Grant (portrayed by Erik Curren) opened the event with his reflections on Reconstruction and the need to reach across the aisle for compromise.

The LWV-CVA was thankful for the opportunity to celebrate our Constitution through participation in

the event!

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## **Gun Violence Prevention Committee "Social Event" Set for October 6 - by Beth Alley and Maggie Hoover, LWV CVA Gun Violence Prevention Committee chairs**

***Calling all GVP Committee Members and all League members interested in Gun Violence Prevention Initiatives!***

Date: October 6, 2023

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Place: Home of Beth Alley

210 Willow Brook Road

Earlysville, VA 22936

RSVP: [Beth.alley@gmail.com](mailto:Beth.alley@gmail.com)

Please join us to help plan this year's GVP Committee activities and to discuss our involvement in communicating the need for sensible gun safety laws to protect our Virginia citizens. According to the latest information from Johns Hopkins, the overall gun death rate slightly decreased in 2022; however, gun suicides reached an all-time high and the gun suicide rate among black teens surpassed the rate among white teens for the first time on record.

As a committee we will continue to coordinate with the Charlottesville Coalition of Gun Violence Prevention and other partners in attending rallies such as the December Vigil for Sandy Hook and Other Victims of Gun Violence; the "Just Ask" Day at the Downtown Mall and the trip to Richmond for the GVP Martin Luther King's Day Vigil. When the General Assembly is in session we will communicate "Action Alerts" for legislation that we either oppose or support.

Any thoughts and ideas on how to make our committee as effective as possible? Let's discuss! Although not mandatory, if you have an article or information relating to any GVP topic please feel free to share it with the group.

Most importantly, come to enjoy an afternoon with like-minded League members!

We hope to see many of you on October 6. Questions, comments, please email: Beth Alley, [Beth.alley@gmail.com](mailto:Beth.alley@gmail.com) or Maggie Hoover email: [maggie.hoover@gmail.com](mailto:maggie.hoover@gmail.com)

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## **International Relations/Federal Gov't Report**

**By Gerry Kruger**

On September 20, 2023 the International Relations/Federal Government committee met at Northside Library at 2:00 pm. Anita Pilling served as chair in the absence of Rice Wagner. Others attending were Jean Minehart, Carol Cutler, Rosalie Simari, Miriam Fleitmon, and Salz Salzman.

The group approved of Anita's suggestion to buy pocket copies of the US Constitution for our members and high school students who register to vote.

The main topic for discussion was the Supreme Court Justices and the increasing lack of trust the public has in their ethics and impartiality. Carol Cutler reported on the problem of ethics being regulated and enforced. Abuse of power and position have undermined the perception of integrity of the judicial branch of our democracy. Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito have failed to disclose lavish gifts from billionaires with ties to right-wing organizations. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg once made a partisan statement about Donald Trump during his campaign for the presidency. Sonia Sotomayor used her position to sell her books. All of these are examples of ethics violations, but no Supreme Court Justices have been held accountable for them. Ginsberg apologized later for her violation.

In 1978 The Ethics in Government Act required certain government officials, including judges and justices, to complete financial disclosures each year, but Thomas and Alito never have. Sheldon Whitehouse, a Rhode Island Democrat, proposed a bill requiring justices to adopt a code of conduct in the Supreme Court, but that bill has not passed.

Since 1948, Congress has required Justices to recuse themselves from cases that could be considered a conflict of interest. However, the law does not provide a mechanism to challenge failure to recuse. We all agreed that much needs to be done to hold Justices accountable for their behavior.

Jean Minehart addressed the pros and cons of Supreme Court Justices having term limits. Term limits would allow presidents to nominate the best candidates regardless of their age. There is also a need for greater diversity on the court. Term limits could help with this. Larry Sabato's book, *A More Perfect Constitution*, suggests a term limit of 18 years. He thinks an even number of justices would be good. A tie vote would uphold the ruling of the appellate court. After their term ends, they could help the circuit courts. He thinks lifetime tenure has become so entrenched that only a change in the Constitution can alter the practice.

The committee thinks our League should draft an opinion regarding Supreme Court ethics standards and term limits for a study to bring before the National League.

Our meetings for the fall months will be on the third Wednesday from noon to 2 pm at the Northside Library: The dates are: October 18, and November 15. Note: Anita Pilling has had to cancel the proposed trip to the Marshall House this month. She will reschedule after the elections are over. We invite anyone who is interested in our meetings to contact Rice Wagner, email: [ricew123@icloud.com](mailto:ricew123@icloud.com) or Anita Pilling, email: [anitapilling.ap@gmail.com](mailto:anitapilling.ap@gmail.com) for more information.

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## **LWV CVA Community Engagement Committee News**

by Lisa Hilgartner, Community Engagement Director

We have started up again sending out postcards, PSAs, contacting media and posting on event calendars for our Community Dialogues . We will do the same for this month's Community Dialogue. Please let Lisa Hilgartner know if your committee will be doing an event , even if it is partnering with other groups. We can help spread the word for that event.

It's voting season! "Facts for Voters" have been published and printed for all five counties and the

City of Charlottesville. They are also on our website! They have been distributed in libraries and community centers who allow us to do so. We still have some left. Let Lisa know if you know of any community areas that do not have our flyers and who do have flyer info in their vestibules.

We have partnered with **Cville Tomorrow** who is publishing a print version of races and info on candidates running for office in our service area. These will be distributed at our Voter Information drives. Extras will be placed in the same areas the Facts for Voters are distributed.

"VOTE" flags have been sent to Lovingson, Scottsville, and Palmyra to display during voting season. There are five flags left we hope to put up. Our search is continuing. Still looking for sites in Greene, Cville and Crozet. If you find a willing place, please contact Lisa who has the remaining flags. [Email: lisamezzo@gmail.com](mailto:lisamezzo@gmail.com)

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## **LWV CVA Voter Services News**

by Susan Roberts, Voter Services Director

**2023 Voter Guide Available!** Following a long League tradition of publishing a "local elections" Voter's Guide, our League has teamed up with *Charlottesville Tomorrow* by sponsoring a very thorough Guide in their free online newsletter. Click on this link [https://www.cvilletomorrow.org/?utm\\_medium=email](https://www.cvilletomorrow.org/?utm_medium=email)

**Our League Logo is at the end of the Guide as a sponsor.**

**Voter Information and Registration Drives** have occurred at The Center at Belvedere, the Shops at Stonefield and Democracy Day event on the downtown mall in September. This month there will be one at Waynesboro Library on Saturday, October 7. Also there will be one at The Center at Belvedere on October 11th from 12:30 to 1:30 just prior to the Senior Statesman's Boards of Supervisors forum. A "Drive" will also be in Scottsville Library in October with the date to be determined.

**High school voter registration:** we have made successful headway with Western Albemarle High School. It's a work in progress. Lisa has reached out to other schools and is awaiting replies. Carolyn Fitzpatrick has done the same for William Monroe High School in Greene County. Most of the high school action happens in the spring when most students are eligible to vote. This fall outreach to schools has included the offer to spread information to faculty, students, and staff. For further information: email Susan Roberts at [susanrofva@aol.com](mailto:susanrofva@aol.com)

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## **LWV CVA Electoral Boards Observer Corps**

**By Kerin Yates, LWV CVA Electoral Boards Observer Corps, Coordinator**

Electoral Board Observer Corps: Kerin Yates, coordinator and Albemarle County observer; Carol Cutler, Fluvanna County observer; Lisa Hilgartner, Nelson County observer; Karen Davenport, Louisa County observer; and Sue Lewis, City of

Charlottesville observer.

As one would expect all electoral boards have been dealing with preparations for the November 7, 2023 elections. And it is absolutely amazing how many different things they must juggle. New regulations, new voting procedures, finding locations, training everyone who will handle your vote. Consider Albemarle County has about 30 different ballots! Karen Davenport emails about Louisa County: "It keeps astounding me how VERY much a registrar does!" Here are the Nelson County's minutes of their Sept 12 meeting which are typical although issues/places differ per county:

#### September 12th Electoral Board Meeting 10 am at the Nelson County Courthouse

1. The equipment demo for the fall voting machines training was held and all 3 Registrar staff plus the EB secretary attended
2. VRAV Training held. All Registrar's staff plus William Smith on EB were trained.
3. New Guidelines from ELECT for EB for ADA surveys have been set.
4. Evaluation on October 13th for Annual Certification that certifies each precinct meets ADA standards. Lovingson is now ADA compliant Other precincts are fixing entrances and parking pads to be in ADA compliance.
5. Stuffed envelopes for Absentee Ballots will be sent out the week on September 19th to those who requested them beforehand. Nelson County has 470 requested absentee ballots. All ready with postage already set.
6. EB went into closed session at this point.

The issue created by SB 80 2022 (whether registrars could speak at public meetings) was finally cleared by a letter from state attorney general Myraies. They **are allowed** to speak at public forums and events. This took a year and a half to be resolved.

Carol Cutler has volunteered to join the corps and will follow Fluvanna County. We remain needing someone to follow Greene. Please contact Kerin Yates (email: [kerinyates@hotmail.com](mailto:kerinyates@hotmail.com)) if you would like more information regarding this opportunity. It involves one meeting , usually an hour long about,seven times a year.

For more information about the LWV CVA Electoral Boards Observer Corps, contact Kerin Yates, email: [kerinyates@hotmail.com](mailto:kerinyates@hotmail.com)

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## LWV CVA Education Committee News for October!

By Kim Harris, Education Committee Chair

**Banned Book Week is 1-7 October this year.** Book bans and attempted bans are on the rise, according to the American Library Association. Be on the lookout for a video from the LWV-VA supporting the week! Check out this link to look for all the ways you can support the week:

<https://uniteagainstbookbans.cmail20.com/t/i-l-ajijiy-ktidjitij-p/>

School Boards are increasingly becoming political battlegrounds. Are you prepared to vote for school board members? There is a webinar being sponsored by *4 Public Education* on 4 October,

7-7:30. The link to register is:

[https://www.4publiceducation.org/so/a4Og\\_hHk1/c?w=wkF141UH9Bc8b0x04UWQKI0zrDCduak7BsU5J0PWs14.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cHM6Ly91czAyd2ViLn timer 20udXMvbWVldGluZy9yZWdpc3Rlci90WklwZHV1dnFqb3FHZFFWZHIyd19tQXdPNGpacGc4S3pPM0siLCJyIjoingfOTI3YmMtYzZiMC00MDFjLWFiZmYtMDVhNDc1MTVzMmMxliwibSI6Im1haWwiLCJjoiOGQ0ODIkZTEtOTM4Yy00YWw2LTk1MDYtMzlwYTFiMmIxYzI0In0](https://www.4publiceducation.org/so/a4Og_hHk1/c?w=wkF141UH9Bc8b0x04UWQKI0zrDCduak7BsU5J0PWs14.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cHM6Ly91czAyd2ViLn timer 20udXMvbWVldGluZy9yZWdpc3Rlci90WklwZHV1dnFqb3FHZFFWZHIyd19tQXdPNGpacGc4S3pPM0siLCJyIjoingfOTI3YmMtYzZiMC00MDFjLWFiZmYtMDVhNDc1MTVzMmMxliwibSI6Im1haWwiLCJjoiOGQ0ODIkZTEtOTM4Yy00YWw2LTk1MDYtMzlwYTFiMmIxYzI0In0)

If you are interested in joining the LWV CVA Education committee, please reach out to Kim at [kwharris555@gmail.com](mailto:kwharris555@gmail.com) or 410-302-6010. Thank you!

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### ***Update your LWV CVA 2023-24 Handbook:***

#### **Welcome New LWV CVA Members!**

Randall Salzman and Jeanne Liedtka: 324 11 St NW, Charlottesville, 22903, email:

[salz@rocketmail.com](mailto:salz@rocketmail.com)

323-466-4411

Rhonda Landis: 212 Ciralda Ct, Crozet, VA 22932

email: [rlandisphd@gmail.com](mailto:rlandisphd@gmail.com)

518-527-0238

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### **LWV CVA Calendar of Events for October 2023 - Mark your Calendars!**

**Banned Book Week: October 1 - 7.** [See Education Committee News above.]

**Gun Violence Prevention Committee - "Social Event"** - Home of Beth Alley, 210 Willow Brook Road Earlysville, VA 22936 - **Friday, October 6, 2 pm, RSVP:** [Beth.alley@gmail.com](mailto:Beth.alley@gmail.com)

**Voter Information and Registration Drives:** Waynesboro Library on Saturday , October 7; The Center at Belvedere on **Wed October 11 from 12:30 to 1:30** just prior to the Senior Statesman's Boards of Supervisors forum. A "Drive" will also be in Scottsville Library in October with the date to be determined .

**"Elections 2023: School Boards - Why They Matter?"** - LWV CVA Community Dialogue - Central Library, Market St. Charlottesville - **Sun Oct 15, 2-4 pm**

**LWV CVA International Relations/Federal Gov't Committee Mtg** - Northside Library on **Wed Oct 18, Noon to 2 pm**

**LWV CVA Board of Directors Meeting** - Northside Library on **Wednesday Oct 18, 3 - 5 pm.** Also available by zoom - contact Meg Heubeck for link - email: [mfh2n@virginia.edu](mailto:mfh2n@virginia.edu)

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League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area  
President: Meg Heubeck  
eVoter Editor: Michele Kellermann  
Visit our website: [lww-cva.org](http://lww-cva.org)

**The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization,** encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We are committed to applying the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our operations and activities. We support governmental policies that apply these principles in addressing the social, environmental and economic problems in our communities.

League of Women Voters of the Charlottesville Area | PO Box 2786, Charlottesville, VA 22902

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