



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS PRINCE WILLIAM AREA

Officers

President

Carol Proven

1st Vice President

Barbara Amster

2nd Vice President

Connie Gilman

Corresponding Secretary

Jessie Barringer

Recording Secretary

Pamela Ferrand

Events

Linda Larsen

Voter Services

Carol Noggle

Membership

Jane Touchet

Newsletter Editor

Karen Kallmeyer

The President's View

JANUARY 2018

The holidays are over, and looking back, Prince William Area League members accomplished much during 2017. Members lobbied representatives in the General Assembly during the "short session" in January and February, participated in candidate forums, educated students at Prince William high schools on the importance of voting, and registered many of them. Voters were registered by a team of members at events such as the Manassas Fall Jubilee and the Community Block Party at the Dar al Noor Mosque, where newly registered voters were encouraged to get out and vote on Election Day or through absentee voting. Hundreds of VOTENOW cards were distributed to citizens across the Prince William area through community events. These efforts led to voter participation that was higher than it's been in decades, throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

There was an orientation meeting on December 2 for new and returning members, held at Chinn Regional Library. Several members of the audience became members of the League after learning about our goals and actions.

Smaller meetings were open to all members with a specific interest. A dinner and movie night was held on November 14 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Night of Terror, with the showing of the movie "Iron Jawed Angels". Member-led book discussions were held around "Hillbilly Elegy" and "Ratf**ked".

Now we plunge into another year of busy times! The General Assembly is meeting on January 10th for the first time in the 2018 session, with a very big facelift, and, as of this writing, still not "together". The pre-session Women's Legislative Roundtable (WLRT), held on Dec. 6, the annual kick-off to the Legislative Session, provided an opportunity for those with various interests to come together and talk about what is important during the upcoming legislative session. Every Wednesday after the first session to the last, members lobby representatives in Richmond, and through the Action Alerts, published by the VA State League, we know what bills need to be watched, and either lobbied for or against. Members can do this by email, telephone or in person. Remember, a bill can become a law! We need to stay vigilant on the positions that are important to the League.

January 6 we had an opportunity to address our local delegates with issues that concern us as a league or individuals, and several League members participated. Carol Noggle reports on that later in this newsletter. Upcoming events include LWV-PWA member Kim Hosen, who as Executive Director of the Prince William conservation Alliance, will address members and guests on the State of the Environment in Prince William County, at a General Meeting/Lunch held on January 20; and, on February 24 there is a showing of the documentary "Chasing the Dragon", filmed in Prince William County, which explores the chilling effects of opioid abuse on the local population. These meetings are open to all, but if you enjoy a smaller group, we will be having more movie events and book discussions on topics of timely interest and importance to members.

The Executive Board is working hard to create a dynamic league where everyone can participate. Read the newsletter, and look at the website and Facebook pages to see what activities are coming up and how you can take part.

Happy New Year to all of you, and may we not forget how lucky we are to live in such interesting times!

Carol Proven

In This Issue...

Upcoming Events

Jan. 16, Board Meeting, p.2

Jan. 18, Re-entry Council, p. 2

Jan. 20, General Meeting p. 2

Jan. 22, SCTF, p. 4

Jan. 23, 1VA2021 Lobby Day, p. 2

Feb. 20, Board Meeting, p. 2

Feb. 24, Chasing the Dragon, p. 2

GENERAL MEETING

Join LWVPWA for a buffet lunch at DV Regency Club on **January 20 from 12:00-2:30**. Kim Hosen of the Prince William Conservation Alliance will present: The State of the Environment in Prince William County.

This is a great time to network with friends, meet new members, and bring a potential new member to a League Event. It is also a time to commemorate the Women's March of 2016 and share in the unity and action that it inspired.

CHASING THE DRAGON

Judy Smith, Jane Maddocks, Mamie Thompson and Linda Larsen met in October to plan the viewing of the documentary, Chasing the Dragon, filmed in Prince William County. The documentary is a series of interviews featuring members of the community who suffered the effects of opioid addiction. The film will be shown on **February 24** at the Little Theater at The Marque in Gainesville. There is another showing planned for the spring.

RAFFLE

LWVPWA member, Judy Anderson, donated the antique book. "Occupations for Women", by Frances E. Willard, published in 1897. This book valued at \$105.00 will be raffled at the **January 20 luncheon**. Tickets are 1 for \$5.00 and 3 for \$10.00. This book takes a fascinating look at the jobs open to women during the era of Alice Paul, Lucy Burns, and other Prominent Suffragettes.

SCTF PUBLIC MEETING

The School Choice Task Force, with Task Force leader Carol Noggle, and other members of the Prince William League, will host a meeting on **Jan. 22, 7 p.m.** at the Central Library in Manassas open to the public. The purpose of the meeting is to inform and educate the public, as well as the LWV-PWA, on issues that affect funding for public schools. There are several bills that may be harmful to public funding, and they need to be watched carefully. Come to the meeting and bring a friend!

Redistricting Lobby Day

OneVirginia2021, the organization that is dedicated to fair redistricting and an end to gerrymandering, is having a series of Lobby Days in Richmond. The days will be divided geographically, and the NOVA day is **Tuesday, January 23**. Join like-minded Leagues in lobbying delegates on this important topic. Sign up at

<https://www.onevirginia2021.org/participate/lobby-days-2018/>

Re-Entry Council Family Orientation

Re-Entry Council Family Orientation for preparing for release from detention of family members. LWV-PWA provides info on Restoration of Rights and on Ban the Box on County job applications. **Thursday, January 18, 5:30 to 7** in Woodbridge. Brenda Carswell is representing us, but it would be great to have someone else go to learn what happens. Other nonprofits come to explain their services. Prince William SkillSource Center: [13370 Minnieville Rd., Woodbridge](https://www.pwskillsource.com/).

League Board Meetings

The LWV-PWA holds board meetings the third Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. at the Manassas City Hall. This month it is **January 16**, and next month will be **February 20**. All members are invited to attend. We welcome your input!

"THEY REPRESENT YOU"

We are pleased that **NOVEC** will again donate \$750 to our account at the LWVUS Education Fund to help with the cost of printing the 2018 TRY edition. In addition to the 2018 election Calendar, the contact information for all our representatives will be updated.

IRON JAWED ANGELS

Sixteen members and guests attended dinner and viewed the movie, Iron Jawed Angels, at the Old Towne Pub Manassas in Manassas on Nov. 14.

The Event commemorated the dedication of Alice Paul and the Suffragists who were cruelly imprisoned in Lorton 100 years ago. Their efforts lead to the passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right to vote. We remember them today with gratitude.

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

Lucia E. Anderson
 Marcia Barham
 Bailey Dove
 Barbara Greiling
 Laurel Hammig
 Cher Muzyk
 Janie Ritter

Welcome to the League of Women Voters – Prince William Area! We are delighted to have you join us!



MEET THE MEMBER

Linda Larsen

I became interested in the achievements of women as a young child growing up in Teaneck, NJ, where I spent many hours in the public library choosing and reading biographies of women. I also enjoyed following the careers of women in politics and on news programs.

I became a teacher in Connecticut after receiving a BA in education from Fairleigh Dickinson University; later in my career I would receive a BA from Stonybrook University. I taught in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey, and I had a full-filling life, combining marriage, raising two sons and teaching, when suddenly, Dave and I were compelled to move to Virginia in the year 2000. That year marked a huge change in my life as Dave and I became empty nesters and I needed to acclimate to my adopted state of Virginia. I found a teaching job in Fairfax and I found the LWV Fairfax Area at about the same time in my transition. The League offered educational opportunities and ways to meet other people involved in the local community and government, leading to new friendships and reviving my interest in what is called Women's Studies, in today's world.

Dave and I moved to PWC in 2008 and I found my way to the newly developing LWV PWA. I work on Events and find this role a great way to interact with LWV members, provide support to membership and Voter Registration, and become better educated on the important legislative issues that affect daily life in Virginia. LWVPWA is also a family affair, as Dave and I have a family membership in League.

I continue to look forward to working with members in the future through LWV Events and other areas of interest, as the LWV PWA lobbies to legislate chosen representatives in the General Assembly in Richmond. Here is to the start of a wonderful New Year!

Pre-Session General Assembly Public Hearing Report

Carol Noggle, LWV-PWA Reporter Supreme

The pre-session General Assembly Public Hearing was held on January 6 at the Board of Supervisors chambers. Present were Senators Barker, McPike, Surovell and Delegates Bell, Carroll Foy, Roem, Guzman, Hugo, Carter, Ayala, and Torian. Having eleven of 13 legislators present was excellent. We were missing only Senators Black and Stuart. The panelists each gave a two-sentence introduction. All of them, both new and experienced, seemed very comfortable, relaxed and positive - very refreshing. They came to listen, so they would not be responding to comments except with occasional thumbs-up, clapping and nodding heads.

There was standing room only in the chamber. 65 people had signed up in advance to speak, about 8 no-shows, others were added at the end so we heard from close to 65 people.

LWV-PWA members present were Carol Proven and Carol Noggle as speakers and in the audience: Grace White, Pat Widener (speaker, also), Brenda Jackson-Sewell, Laura Feld-Mushaw, and Jimmy Jones. Apologies if anyone was missed.

Several officials spoke: two local Judges pleading for appointment of another judge to address the long wait of cases; Brad Marshall (PW area Deputy CA) also about the judicial vacancy problem. Michele White, Director of Elections; Keith Scarborough, PW Electoral Board; and Hilda Barg, former PW BOCS member now working with ARC regarding Medicaid waivers and housing for the homeless.

The audience was kind and applauded after each presentation.

Carol Noggle spoke on several topics: restoration of felons' voting rights (by keeping the Governor's executive power of clemency), Ban the Box, transparency in General Assembly committees by recording all votes, and preventing the diversion of public funds to private schools (especially opposing vouchers and any expansion of EISTC), and the criminal justice issue of increasing the larceny threshold. The early highlight was the response to Carol Proven's statement for No-Excuse Absent Voting (NEAV) and support for ERA that immediately received loud applause and "Whoo Hoo!" When Michele White spoke she wholeheartedly supported the League's support for NEAV. She showed examples of literature that the EO has circulated to clarify who can vote Absentee. (She told me that she believes there is significant statewide support among General Registrars for NEAV.)

There was a wide range of topics addressed within the 3-minute time slots. (Devon Cabot, Sen. McPike's aide, provided a list of the speakers, their home city, and topic. The order was followed very well under the direction of Del. Torian and Sen. Barker.)

Topics included

Criminal Justice Reform (increase the larceny threshold for felony from the current \$200). Rev. Kenneth Mason stated that the issue should be considered with a moral basis.

Increase measures for Mental Health services and programs for Peer Support for addiction, Suicide Prevention. Also, police training was requested for preparation for cases requiring crisis intervention. Mr. Urbina, whose teen age son was recently killed by police officers responding to a family crisis in Haymarket, spoke passionately for better methods.

Healthcare: Medicaid expansion

Childcare Safety: More regulations needed for home childcare givers; particularly requiring training for emergencies and background checks. (A mother testified tearfully about the loss of her baby.)

Affordable Housing: relocate mobile homes, change zoning to allow for "tiny homes."

Opioid addiction: Chrissy Fauls, of the Prevention Alliance of Greater Prince William, has expertise in this issue. I believe she works in PW County.

http://www.behealthybehappyprincewilliam.com/content/sites/princewilliam/Opioid_Event_October_24_2017.pdf

Their website is under construction: <https://thepreventionalliance.org/about/>

Education: Early Childhood: "Pre-School Initiative" per Mary-Catherine Deadman; Increasing teacher pay: Riley O'Casey (PWA Ed Association); LWV: our task force talking points opposing public funds going to private schools was provided as handouts to the legislators.

Environment: Disposal of coal ash in PW County is a significant issue. Sen. Surovell has been making proposals for its removal from Dominion Energy deposits at Possum Point. Residents have been very disappointed in the response from Dominion. Water contamination issues were presented by a family that has experienced problems on their property for many years.

School recess: Families wearing green "More Recess" shirts advocated, with very good points, for increasing elementary school recess to 30 minutes. A 4th grade boy read a great statement about how it was really hard to stay seated for so long at school. He included a joke, "What is a 4th grade kid with no recess (or only 15 minutes of recess)?" [See Answer below.](#)

Non-discrimination: A mother from Bristow asked for non-discrimination policies that would address issues such as those of her transgender daughter. A woman whose ancestor's house had been burned by the KKK stated she was told by her family that she had to continue to beware discrimination. She also works on prevention of human trafficking.

Redistricting reform and Ranked Choice Voting: 2 or 3 speakers.

School Lunch Debt: Adelle Settle, who has started a fund to pay for kids' lunch debts spoke about the need to reduce "shaming."

Convention of States: two speakers from the COS group spoke about changing the U.S. Constitution via a Convention.

Pat Widener (LWV-PWA member) asked for universal pre-K programs for children from low-income families, support for HB39 to support an increase in the minimum wage, and measures to prevent voter suppression.

People on the speakers' list who were from outside of PW were not present -- maybe because of the cold weather. They were listed from areas such as King George, North Chesterfield, and Stafford. Sen. Stuart, who represents King George and some of Stafford, was not present. (Not a surprise, since his home is quite far from PW County.) So, the person from King George would not have been able to address Sen. Stuart anyway.

Jill Palermo, reporter for the Gainesville/Fauquier Times, was present throughout so I hope she publishes a thorough account. [Answer to joke: "A teacher's worst nightmare."](#)