



THE DC VOTER

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November-December, 2011

President's Message

By Kathryn Ray

If your mailbox is like mine, then it is beginning to fill with appeals from many organizations seeking end-of-year contributions. When you are making choices, please remember the League.

League of Women Voters of DC is proudly political, but strictly non-partisan. We should never be characterized as RED or BLUE. Unfortunately, right now, we are in the RED. We believe that BLACK is BEAUTIFUL and that's where we want to be: IN THE BLACK.

Each year for the past decade, the League of Women Voters of DC has relied on savings to keep up our great work. Now I'm asking you to help us avoid being in the RED.

As we gear up for the 2012 election season, with a full range of our traditional voter services activities planned, we are asking you to help us be in the BLACK.

Here is how you can help...

Get out your checkbook.

Give a League membership as a holiday gift. Get your nieces, nephews and children involved. Don't you have a cousin who would enjoy our newsletter? Membership forms are on p. 2 of this newsletter & on our website LWVDC.org.

Welcome a new neighbor with a gift of League membership.

Buy some pecans – they are delicious, healthy treats and only \$10 per pound. Email **Judy Smith** for details: smarmayor@aol.com (see p. 8) Bundle the pecans with our limited edition League cookbook. Available for \$15 if mailed within the

US. Check out the recipe for Spiced Pecans on page 78. Email cookbook author **Goody Braun** goody.solomon@verizon.net for details.

Buy a copy of the 2011 edition of our book "Know the District of Columbia." Just \$13 plus postage. Read it and pass it on to a new neighbor. Email Kathryn Ray KCRDLB@gmail.com for details.

Where is the greatest need? The General Fund. It pays for postage, photocopying, meeting support and all those rather boring things that keep an organization going. Please make a check out to LWVDC and mail it to our office – 1100 15th St NW 11th Floor DC 20005. If a tax deduction is important to you, make your check payable to LWVDC-EF, our 501c3 Education Fund. The EF supports all of the fun stuff, but already has a more healthy bottom line.

You don't need your checkbook to ask a friend or neighbor to join the League – membership forms are on our website LWVDC.org and on page 2 of this newsletter.

Thank you for being a member of the League and for your support of our activities. When the nominating committee puts out a call for volunteers, please consider standing for office.

Best wishes for a safe and warm holiday season. Rest up for election year 2012! Democracy isn't a spectator sport. The League needs you to help us ensure we have an informed electorate who will make wise decisions on election day.



League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia

Membership Application Form

Name _____

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (work/day) _____

Cell phone _____ Email address _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____

\$45.00 one member

\$60.00 two members in the same household.

\$20.00 for student membership (include the name of your college/university)

Members of the League of Women Voters of DC are automatically become members of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Dues are not tax deductible. Please make check payable to:

League of Women Voters of the District of Columbia

Comments (e.g. interests, how you heard about the League)

Notice: The League publishes a private membership directory that is exclusively for League members to contact fellow members regarding League business. Any other use of the contents of the directory is strictly prohibited. The information contained within may not be shared beyond the League. If you do not wish to have your contact information listed, please initial here: _____

Focus on Units

The League of Women Voters prides itself in being a grassroots organization. The US League is made up of state leagues (which DC is considered.) Each state League is comprised of smaller groups organized by city or county, or in the case of the DC League, by Units. Generally organized by neighborhood, the D.C. League currently has six active Units that meet at various times. Members are welcome to attend any Unit, regardless of where they reside. The Units offer an opportunity for small group discussion and to provide advice and direction to the board.

Members are encouraged to establish units in all parts of the city. Let the League office know if you are interested in forming a Unit in your neighborhood.

In addition to State and Local Leagues, groups of Leagues may form an Inter-League Organization (ILO). DC belongs to the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area (NCA) which focuses on governmental issues of a metropolitan, regional or inter-jurisdictional nature, such as transportation and environmental quality. DC League member **Elinor Hart** is the current NCA president. **Jack Mathison** and **Geraldine Whitley** are on the NCA Board.

New Unit Formed

October was the inaugural meeting of the Thomas Circle/Intown Unit. The discussion of the Federal Role in Education was so lively that it had to be continued to another meeting. Many thanks to **Sarah McMeans** for convening the group.

Can't make a daytime Unit meeting?

Southwest/Saturday Unit will be meeting on Saturdays and the NW Evening Unit meets on Tuesday evenings at 7:30. All are welcome, but please let the Unit Chair or hostess know that you plan to attend. For SW, contact **Alex Dickson** - Dickson.alexandra@gmail.com For NW Evening, contact **Kathryn Ray** KCRDLB@gmail.com. If you don't use email, please call the office 202 222-0710 to R.s.v.p.

Our League's membership is UP almost 18%. Thanks to each of you who has encouraged someone to join. A very special "thank you" to our most enthusiastic recruiter, Jack Mathison, and to our Membership Team: Alex Dickson, Pat Hallman, Linda Softli & Melody Webb.

Education Study Wrapping Up- What's Next?

With much thanks and gratitude to our Education Committee Chair **Constance Tate** and her able committee members, we anxiously await their report. **Privatization of Government** services is our next topic to explore. Has privatization saved the country money or made us more efficient? Let's find out. Study materials are available on our website LWVDC.org. Click on the "Privatization" link on the far left of our homepage.

Schools Official and Scholar Mary Lord featured speaker at Brown Bag Luncheon on November 2

By Abigail Nichols

The League expresses hearty thanks to **Mary Lord**, the Ward 2 representative on the District of Columbia State Board of Education, journalist and education scholar, who spoke to the LWVDC about her experiences with the federal role in education. Her articles on K12 and higher education have appeared in a variety of national publications. She has visited schools and interviewed superintendents and teachers across the country, including mayor-appointed school chiefs in Boston and Philadelphia, attended academic and professional conferences, and distilled research into reader-friendly reports explaining what trends and regulations mean for parents, teachers, and kids. A longtime resident of the District of Columbia, **Mary Lord** has volunteered in schools since her children — who have attended District public, charter and private schools — were toddlers. In addition to her Ward 2 position, **Mary Lord** is also on the Board of the Natl. Assn. of State Boards of Education, *Natl. Education Writers' Assn.*, *Investigative Reporters & Editors, Inc.*, and the *Dupont Circle Citizens Assn.*

Environmental Issues Confront the Metro Area

By Geraldine J. Whitley, Environment Coordinator

Clean River Project

On October 12, 2011, after years of planning and evaluation to find the best solution for keeping local waterways clean and healthy, the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA) launched the new "Clean River Project." This project is estimated to cost approximately \$2.6 billion and will address sewage issues in the District and take on a number of other environmental issues. More information about this initiative can be found at www.dcwater.com or through recent articles the Washington Post. The Clean River Projects that are being undertaken by the WASA are the following:

1. Replace the aging Poplar Point Pumping Station. Construction is anticipated from 2015-2018.

2. Blue Plains portion of Anacostia Tunnel System. Design build contract was awarded in the spring of 2011, completion is scheduled for 2015.

3. Outfall 19 (RFK Stadium). Construction began August 2011. No completion date announced.

4. Outfalls, construction around M Street to create larger sewer chambers that will prevent combined sewer overflow from Outfalls. Construction is planned from spring 2012 to 2014.

5. Construction on the Anacostia River Tunnel portion of the Anacostia Tunnel System is scheduled from summer 2013 to fall 2017. For more information contact DC Water's Office of External Affairs by calling [\(202\) 787-2200](tel:(202)787-2200) or email ExternalAffairs@dcwater.com. The complete text of the Long Term Control Plan for Combined Sewer Overflows can also be found at the following public libraries: Capitol View, Mount Pleasant, Northeast, Woodridge, Southeast, Shepherd Park, Tenley-Friendship and Washington Highlands.

Recommended reading for Environmentalists

Recently, I found an interesting book by **Claire Hope Cummings**, [Uncertain Peril: Genetic Engineering and the Future of Seeds](#), (Beacon Press, Boston, 2008.) The author states that, "Life on earth is facing unprecedented challenges from global warming, war, and mass extinctions. The plight of seeds is a less visible but no less

fundamental threat to our survival. Seeds are at the heart of the planet's life-support systems. Their power to regenerate and adapt are essential to maintaining our food supply and our ability to cope with a changing climate." **Cummings** has provided useful information for the LWVDC to use when its members advocate on behalf of national and international markets.

U.S. League President, **Elisabeth MacNamara**, sent a letter urging Senators to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution. The League of Women Voters of the US and coalition partners sent a letter to the Senate urging them to oppose S. 1786, which would block the EPA's ability to clean-up life-threatening toxic air pollution. A letter was sent to Senators urging them to oppose the Congressional Review Act resolution sponsored by Senator Rand Paul which would void the life-saving Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR).

Great Decisions Program for 2012

Organizational Meeting January 4 @ 2:30

Thanks to **Joan Wilson**, the League will once again participate in the Foreign Policy Association's **Great Decisions** reading and discussion program. For those not yet acquainted with this series, the purpose is to engage and educate participants on important issues of the day by using interesting DVDs and reading materials as a springboard for discussion. The 2012 agenda includes:

- Middle East realignment
- Promoting Democracy
- Mexico
- Cybersecurity
- Exit from Afghanistan & Iraq
- State of the oceans
- Indonesia
- Energy geopolitics

If you would like to participate, please call **Joan Wilson**. She will be ordering the books very soon. Books also can be ordered directly from the Foreign Policy Assn. website, the cost of the book is \$20. www.fpa.org/great_decisions The discussions

will take place in the Theater of Ingleside of Rock Creek 3050 Military Road, NW

Do You Have a Will? Is the League in It?
by Ken Nesper, LWVDC Secretary

A will is a statement of your wishes about the people and organizations you want to benefit from your estate. By making a will, you will ensure that your intentions are clearly expressed, and that those administering your estate follow your instructions. Of course, you want to provide for your family, but you also have the opportunity to continue your support for the mission of the DC League of Women Voters. League members contribute generously to its mission, but often, when members pass away they haven't made any provision for the League because they never quite got around to it.

There is a simple and meaningful way, through a bequest in your will, to continue your support of the League and ensure that its mission continues unabated. It's easy to include the League in your will. If you are writing or rewriting your will, simply add a bequest for the League. Your bequest can be of a stated dollar amount, a piece of property including stocks, or you can bequeath a certain percentage of the "residue" (the amount that remains after paying inheritances, debts, and costs). If you already have a will, you could add a codicil which is a simple amendment. The League strongly urges you to consult an attorney experienced in estate planning.

By including a bequest to the League in your will, you will not only provide the invaluable financial support that the League relies upon, but you'll also be associating yourself with the continuing efforts to strengthen democratic institutions of government in DC

League Development Steering Committee

Natalie Howard and **Jack Mathison** urge us to think big in our fundraising efforts. Are you in?

If you feel called to help, please contact the League office (202-222-0710 or lwvdc@aol.com), Secretary **Ken Nesper** (202-269-3890 or kenesperjr@netzero.net), or Membership Director **Alexandra Dickson** (202-276-2589 or Dickson.Alexandra@gmail.com). The future of the League of Women Voters of DC may be secured through your efforts.

HIV/AIDS Forum Report

by Julia Dieperink, LWVDC Program Intern

“Health is more than individual behaviors”

– **Michelle Beadle-Holder** of the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association

On Tuesday September 27th, the League of Women Voters of DC hosted a health forum entitled “What Are We Doing About the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in DC?” This event was located in the Frank D. Reeves Center and open to the public. It had an impressive list of contributors: Whitman-Walker Health, The Women’s Collective, Metro TeenAIDS, and the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association. There was also a representative from the Shiloh Baptist Church present in the panel.

This forum was focused on how HIV/AIDS acted in the District in addition to general information about the virus. For instance, **Dr. Gregory Pappas**, Sr. Deputy Director, DC Department of Health, made sure to point out that the population in DC that is infected with HIV is an aging one. This is because people with HIV/AIDS are living longer, but it also means that the care that needs to be provided has completely changed. Healthcare providers now must be aware that HIV/AIDS is not the only thing that they will be treating.

This type of all-encompassing care was re-emphasized by all of the participants in the forum. **Meghan Davies**, from Whitman-Walker Health, made it clear that all healthcare needs would be met, including dental. **Hazel Smith**, from the

Women's Collective, discussed the issues surrounding homelessness and being HIV positive. She spoke about the number of resources that the Women's Collective has, because no one is going to be worried about their medicine if they don't have food. **Angel Brown**, from Metro TeenAIDS, discussed the resources they have that focus simply on the youth. Even though the population with HIV/AIDS is aging, it is important not to forget about the youthful one as well.

Overall the tone of the forum was both positive and cautionary. The District of Columbia has come a long way in the fight against HIV/AIDS, with advances in medicine and programs, but there is still a long way to go in combating this epidemic.

For more information on any of these organizations please go to:

Whitman-Walker Health: www.whitman-walker.org

DC Department of Health: www.dchealth.dc.gov

The Women's Collective:
www.womenscollective.org

Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association: www.mwpha.org

Metro TeenAIDS: www.metroteenaids.org

**Watch for a FACTS AND ISSUES on HIV/AIDS
in the January Voter**

Jan. Units will discuss HIV/AIDS (see p. 8)

Membership Initiative Report

by Alexandra Dickson

We added 25 members since January for an increase of 17.6%. For Leagues participating in the LWVUS Membership Recruitment Initiative program, this is three times the average growth! We've done well this year.

Now, in addition to continuing to recruit, we need to direct some of our energies in engaging our new

and long time members. The pictorial directory effort was, I think, an excellent first step at this. **Jack** did a great job reaching out to everyone and I think that personal touch really had positive impact. Our new and revitalized units will also hopefully help add to involvement and energy.

Councilmember Catania's Office Meet and Greet

By Julia Dieperink, LWVDC Program Intern

On Tuesday September 13th, **Councilman Catania** had an office open house from 2pm to 4pm in order to introduce his new staff and start the political season. This was a good opportunity for the League to be introduced to the new staff members and to advertise upcoming events. This was particularly useful in regards to the September 27th health forum "What Are We Doing About The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in DC?" The Councilman's office was very interested in hearing about this panel because of their preparation for the upcoming XIX International AIDS Conference (July 22-27 2012). It was also a good opportunity to advertise this event, and the League in general, to all of the other organizations that were networking at the open house as well.

Help Register New Voters December 10 & 13 (Tuesdays)

League volunteers register new voters on the second Tuesday of each month immediately following the Naturalization Ceremony at the courthouse. Special thanks to our faithful volunteers **Judy Smith** and **Janet Bachman** Please email the League if you would be interested in helping lwvdc@aol.com. Next dates: Dec. 10 & Dec. 13 10am US District Courthouse, 300 Constitution Avenue NW 6th Floor. Arrive early and bring an ID.

Thanking the League

Mrs. Natalie A.T. Howard writes "I am surprised but exceedingly grateful that you have seen fit to award the Sheila Willet President Award for 2011 to me. I treasure the kind words and gracious

letters from so many chairmen, members and friends as well....To have all these years of being a League Lady so impressively outlined and to be presented with a beautiful plaque commemorating the event indeed leaves me feeling very, very special...I thank you from the bottom of my heart....My sincerest thanks to you and all who helped bring it about."

December Unit Socials

December meetings are traditionally "Unit Choice." On Dec. 14, (Wed.) 12:00 - 2:00 pm **NW Day Unit** will host a Pot Luck at the home of **Jeanette Miller**. Please contact **Barbara Yeomans** to coordinate food and RSVP. (202-363-8940)

On Dec. 21 (Wed.) 9:45 am -12 pm **Upper 16th St** Unit December Meeting. Will be held at the home of **Constance Tate** Please call to RSVP (202-882-0387).

League Members in Action

The League was well represented at **DCVote's** annual Champions of Democracy gala in October.

Linda Softli and **Kathryn Ray** attended a lecture and reception honoring Women Journalists at the Turkish Ambassador's Residence.

November 12 Woman's Board Annual Luncheon at Ingleside at Rock Creek was attended Thomas Circle residents **Beatrice Fuller**, **Joan Ensor**, **Elizabeth Herakakis** and **Jack Mathison**

Protests continuing in front of Realco Guns on Marlboro Pike from 4:00 to 5:00 PM every Monday through the winter months.

Kathryn Ray presented a copy of the League's position on public libraries from Where We Stand to the Urban Land Institute committee exploring uses of the MLK, Jr. Memorial Library.

CNHED's Art in Action Dec. 1

The Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development—LWVDC Community Partner—invites you to attend their special event on Thursday Dec. 1 6:30-8:30. Art in Action will feature photography, paintings and artwork

curated by **Black Artists of DC**. Enjoy networking, hors d'oeuvres and cocktails. Tickets can be purchased at www.artinaction2011.eventbrite.com or by calling **Stephen Seed** at 202.745.0902.

Volunteers Needed for National Program Planning

In even years, the League meets to discuss what programs or plans we want our national organization to study or issues on which to take action. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 25 from noon-2PM. Volunteers are needed to monitor the email listserv and to act as discussion leaders at the Jan. 25 meeting. If you are interested, please contact Kathryn Ray 202 244-0770 or KCRDLB@gmail.com

The results of the National Program Planning meeting will be forwarded to the LWVUS national board for consideration at Convention in June 2012.

News from the National League Office

The League of Women Voters joined with 277 other organizations in a letter to members of the House of Representatives and Senate opposing passage of a so-called Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution. The League has long opposed the balanced budget amendment as a danger to the economy and the balance of powers between the three branches of government.

The League sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose the termination of the Election Assistance Commission, the only federal agency that devotes its full resources to improving American elections.

In a letter and press conference, the League and coalition partners called for improvements to the Federal Election Commission.

The League submitted comments to the United Nation's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on CEDAW and the Right to Vote and Hold Office.

The League urged Committee leaders to submit all deficit documents to the Deficit

Committee for public review.

PECAN SALE TO BENEFIT LEAGUE

There's more than just protein in the "All American Nut." Pecans are a delicious, nutrient rich food packed with, protein, vitamin A, vitamin E, folic acid, calcium, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous & zinc.

They're also naturally cholesterol and sodium free.

Pecans are a great gift for family and friends.

\$10 for each 1 pound bag of pecans (note – bags of pecans sold in stores are rarely a full pound!)

\$2.50 of each bag sold is contributed directly to LWVDC

Please place your orders with your Unit Chair or directly with Judy Smith 202 882-3021

You can pick up your order from Judy Smith, 7628 17th St., NW

Judy will deliver to Unit Chairs or anyone who orders a case (24 bags).

Dr. Billie A. Day, Immediate Past President of the LWVDC to receive United Nations Association-National Capital Area Human Rights Award December 8

Join the League table on Thursday, Dec. 8 as **Billie** is honored for her lifetime commitment to human rights.

The luncheon will commence at noon in Cannon House Caucus Room 345, Independence Avenue (closest House Office Building to the Capitol South Metro stop) If you would like to sit at the League table, please mail a check payable to UNA-NCA (not the League - \$100 non-UNA members, \$80 UNA members) to the

League office: 1100 15th St. NW 11th Floor DC 20005.

CHECKS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 27.

Congratulations, Billie!

January Unit Meetings: HIV/AIDS Crisis in DC

Watch the January Voter for Details

Chevy Chase/Ingleside – TBA

NW Day - Jan. 17 (Tues.) noon. Iona Senior Services.

Evening Unit – Jan. 17 (Tues.) 7:30 at the home of Kathryn Ray

SW/Sat. – Jan. 21 (Sat.) Tiber Island Clubhouse, 6th & N Sts. SW 9:45-11:30

Thomas Circle/Intown Tuesday, Jan. 17 (Tues.) 10:30 AM in the Club Room 1330 Mass. NW

Upper 16th Street – Jan. 18 (Wed.) 9:45-noon. Location TBA

Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Donors

*Anne Laroche
Abigail Nichols
Adrienne Fields
Alexandra Dickson
Alla Mainer
Anna Marsh
Audrey H. Hatry
Barbara Stout
Billie Day
Bonnie Bell Jack
Carol Hansong
Catherine Burnight
Christine Matthews
Constance Tate
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Sally Greenberg
Sarah McMeans
Susan Capozzi
Susan Rao
Finna Freeman
Virginia Gorman
Vivianne Moson
Wm. R. O'Field*

Please advise the office if any name was inadvertently omitted.

*Join us in Honoring
Dr. Billie A. Day
As she receives the
Human Rights Award
from the
United Nations Association
Of the National Capital
December 8
Details inside on page 8*

Dec. 1 (Thurs.) 6:30-8:30. Art in Action benefit for affordable housing – see p. 7

Dec. 8 (Thurs)UNA/NCA Luncheon noon Dec. United Nations Assoc. NCA to honor **Billie Day** - see page 8

Dec. 13 (Tues.) Help Register New Voters. – see p. 6

Dec. 14 (Wed.) 12:00 - 2:00 pm NW Day Unit Pot Luck – see p. 7

Dec. 21 (Wed.) 9:45 am -12 pm Upper 16th St Unit December Meeting– see p. 7

Jan. 4, 2012 (Wed.)9:45-12pm Board Meeting.

Jan. 4, 2012 (Wed.)2:30 Great Decisions Organizational Meeting. Ingleside at Rock Creek 3050 Military Rd. NW Joan Wilson in charge. – see p. 4

Jan. 10 (Tues.)10am-12pm Help register new voters at the court house. –see p.6

January 16-21 Unit meetings HIV/AIDS

Please confirm dates and times! See page 8

Jan. 25 (Wed.) National Program Planning General Meeting. noon (tentative) – see p. 7