



League of Women Voters of Central Vermont

Bulletin

Spring 2015

Spring Message

After a quiet winter, we're looking forward to a more active spring, with a number of exciting and energizing events in the offing.

First, however, we mark with sadness the passing of long-time member and stalwart supporter of the League Flo Young. Joanne Bair remembers Flo on p. 3.

We are also starting a new feature in this issue, with a profile of Lindy Biggs. Another member will be introduced in each issue.

March 21 will bring us LWVVT's Spring Fling, with a keynote address by Peter Levine, author of *We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For: The Promise of Civic Renewal in America*. We hope you will join us at the Best Western in Waterbury for a day of getting to know the League and fellow Leaguers, as well as lunch and Prof. Levine's talk. Check the LWVVT website, www.lwvofvt.org, for details.

Annual Meeting has been scheduled for May 13. Details to follow, *save the date*.

The 9th Annual Quad States Leadership Conference will be held on May 16 and 17 (15th optional). See the *Green Mountain Citizen* for details.

Attorney General William Sorrell will keynote the LWVVT State Convention on Saturday, June 13. Location is being negotiated, but will be in or near Montpelier.

These are all interesting and energizing events. In these times of money flooding our electoral process and attempts, some succeeding, of voter suppression, the League is needed more than ever. Join us in Making Democracy Work[©] for everybody.

Kate Rader

P.S. Hope you saw the spread on voting in Feb. 19 issue of *The Bridge*!! You can see it online at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/256275875/The-Bridge-February-19-2015>

Like us on Facebook at League of Women Voters of Vermont!

Protecting Voters

Rooted in the movement that secured the right to vote for women, the League has worked to foster civic engagement and enhance access to the vote since our organization was founded in 1920. Over time our work has evolved from efforts to gain and foster women's suffrage to ensuring that *all* eligible voters – particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved communities, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities and low-income Americans – have the opportunity and the information they need to exercise their right to vote.

The League's mission – Making Democracy Work® – includes ensuring a free, fair and accessible electoral system for all eligible voters. Through our national Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project (PAVP) and dozens of state-based volunteer activist teams, the League works year-round to combat voter suppression through advocacy, grassroots organizing, legal action and public education. Our efforts have resulted in the protection of voting rights and ballot access for millions of Americans. Our work to protect voters falls into the categories below:

Voting Rights – We seek to protect and expand voting rights through advocating for proactive reforms such as expanded early voting and online voter registration, ensuring existing pro-voter laws are being followed and challenging all efforts that limit the ability of voters' to exercise this basic right. The League actively opposes voter photo ID laws, advocates against barriers to the voter registration process, works to prevent last-minute Election Day barriers and helps millions of voters get the information and any required documentation they need to vote.

Improving Elections – We work to modernize our voting systems, streamline the voting process, promote transparent and accountable redistricting and make it easier for all eligible citizens to become active participants in our electoral process. In efforts to improve the voting experience, the League focuses on efforts to establish permanent and portable statewide voter registration, expand early voting, improve polling place management, expand online voter registration and implement electronic streamlining. We also work to ensure compliance with laws like the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

DC Voting Rights – We advocate for the rights of citizens of the District of Columbia to be afforded the same rights of self-government and full voting representation in Congress as are all other citizens of the

United States.

Meet Lindy Biggs

I grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, but am happy and proud to call myself a Vermonter now. Around 1980 when I was in graduate school a friend introduced me to Vermont, and it was love at first sight. I didn't know if I would ever be able to live here, but it was an ongoing dream for me. Montpelier is an amazing community, when I tell friends in other places what happens here they are almost incredulous. One friend from Boston visits regularly and says to people there, "I can't believe people get to live that way every day."

I've lived in East Montpelier part time since 2000. In 2012 my husband and I retired after teaching for 25 years at Auburn University, and moved here full time. I taught history of technology, environmental history, and sustainability. The piece of my career that I'm most proud of is the creation of a Center for Sustainability at Auburn. It was an exciting time early in the campus sustainability movement, and Auburn was a very unlikely place to do that work. We made a big difference, both with campus operations and with a degree program that I developed and managed.

I've written a book about the development of the factory system in the U.S., and am currently writing on 18th century child labor in England's first textile factories. I also continue to be very interested in sustainability issues.

In addition to continuing to work on research and writing history, I tutor neighbor children in math and writing. I'm also on the Kellogg-Hubbard Library Board of Trustees. We live in a co-housing community, which is a great way to live. We have a large garden and grow a large amount of our own food. We raise chickens as a group so we have the best chicken around right from our own freezer.

I joined the Central Vermont League a year ago. I've always known about it, have given a few talks at different chapters, but never been a member. My friend Sue Racannelli invited me to a meeting and I decided to join. The League's mission to educate voters is as important today as it has ever been, maybe more so. We're all so overwhelmed with "information" that it's hard to keep up and hard to find good information. The League has a vital role to play in providing clear, unbiased information about candidates and issues.

Calendar of Events

March

21 Saturday 8:30-2:30 LWVVT Spring Fling, Best Western Hotel, Waterbury

May

13 Wednesday 5:30-8:00 p.m. LWVCEN Annual Meeting

16,17 Sat., Sun. Quad States Leadership Conference, Hampton Inn, Wells, ME.
See Green Mountain Citizen and www.lwvofvt.org for details.

June

13 Saturday 9:00-2:30 LWVVT Convention



Remembering Flo Young

The league of women Voters has lost one its most ardent members.

Florence (Flo) Young passed away on Jan. 27. Although she was involved in a number of interests and activities, the democratic process and the League of Women Voters were at the top of her list.

Flo had been a member of the Montpelier chapter until it folded in 1998, and then was influential in re-establishing our present chapter. She served on the Board and was involved in many of the League's activities until her health declined last year.

The annual Naturalization Ceremony held in the well of the State House was originally her idea.

"Democracy isn't a spectator sport." We have probably all heard her say it. And we know that she not only said it, but she deeply believed and lived it.

In addition to her League activities, she served as a volunteer docent in the Vermont Sate House, a building that she loved. She gave tours, as well as education tours to special groups, where she explained the workings of the State House, and

especially the process involved in passing legislation. She also liked to note that for the legislators and the politicians, "it was all a game!"

In addition to several jobs that she held during her forty years in Vermont, she was also strongly interested in, and involved with the theater, especially the Montpelier theater Guild.

Flo was always willing to share her strong opinions as great stories, many of which related to her work in the State House. Whether it was a Board Meeting or other League Activity, she had something to say, and added her own delightful spark to the gathering.

LWVCEN Annual Meeting

***Wednesday, May 13, 2015
5:30 p.m.***

Save the Date!!

Details to Follow

This is when we decide where our energies should go in the coming year. Don't miss it!



LWV Central VT

1186 Towne Hill Road
East Montpelier, VT 05651

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