



The Voter

Virginia Peninsula MAL Unit Of The League Of Women

90th Birthday

In 1920, after a 72-year struggle, and when passage of the 19th amendment appeared to be imminent, members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association met to form the League of Women Voters. Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed the creation of a League to “finish the fight” and to work to end all discrimination against women. While initially concerned with the status and rights of women, the League of Women Voters gradually expanded its interests to include issues affecting the whole community. Today, the League works to effect change on a wide variety of issues including health care, education, climate change, land use, and election and campaign finance reform.

The women who started the movement to give women the right to vote really didn't know if, how or when they would succeed. And yet they persevered – changing our democracy and society. Today we are equally committed to improving our democracy, and keeping our community healthy, vibrant and strong for all. With volunteers organized into 850 chapters across the country, membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages.

We take seriously our legacy of providing trustworthy and balanced resources to citizens and lawmakers. Over the last 90 years, the League of Women Voters has left its footprint on American history, and our democracy is stronger for it. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our democracy over the next 90 years. After all, the League is *the* organization where hands-on to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

Our new website is on-line check it out at :

www.lwvpeninsula.org

It gives a description of our study groups and their goals. Also links to other league links. A group restricted area for our research groups will be coming soon.

NEXT MEETING

April 29, 2010 6:30

Hampton Main Library

Speaker FM-FADA

We will be discussing Flooding and Munitions Issues on Fort Monroe. For more information on these research groups see:

www.lwvpeninsula.org



Sunshine Week

Spring is around the corner, but clouds still cover much of government and how it operates. That's why each year, the League uses Sunshine Week to open the dialogue and urge citizens like you to get involved with your government.

An open and accountable government is the cornerstone of a healthy democracy, and for decades the League of Women Voters has been on the front lines promoting transparency and accountability.

As a local league we have chosen transparency in local governments as one of our areas of study. Our observer core is looking at closed door meetings and whether they are following the legal definition for meetings behind closed doors. Unfortunately, this will always be an issue with government. Even if a current elected body has a good transparency record the next elected body can alter that policy. This is why as a league we must be vigilant and make sure that decisions that affect the citizens are made in an open forum.

Thanks to the observer core for tracking happenings in our localities. It may seem that attending one meeting a week and taking notes is not a major task. However, we are able to track all that is happening in our localities by adding your notes to other league members meeting notes. If you want to be an observer at a meeting let the league know.



Joseph C. Kilgore

Cheasapeake Bay Seat A

Challenger— Sharron H. Warren

Email jkilg312@cox.net

What is your Educational background? What qualifications, certifications or skills that would be an asset in this position?

I'm a product of HCS and an ODU graduate. Employed at Northrop Grumman for 24 years I'm currently an Engineering Manager. I'm a parent of three children and husband to a 2nd grade teacher. I've been active in PTA for 14 years, including six years as President. I've served on the Policy Review committee, Student's Rights and Responsibilities committee, Facilities Assessment committees, KHS After Prom committee, Community Priority Workshops, and the KHS Band Treasurer.

What is your opinion of home-school children taking a class in public schools which the parent does not feel qualified to teach? What is your opinion on the home-schooled children participating in extracurricular activities in the public schools?

Home-schooling is a challenging endeavor and I respect parents who believe it is the best choice for them. I understand parents of home-schooled children may need help in areas that exceed their qualification. I would encourage any parent of a home-schooled child who needs assistance to work with the public school system to meet their child's educational needs. Extracurricular activities in public schools for home-schooled children should be available, but may need to have a financial assessment associated with it given the particular activity.

The state budget cuts are going to be a difficult issue for our local schools. What recommendations do you have to save money on the budget.

Given the extremely challenging budget cuts this year, I believe the current board and the administration have worked hard to implement improvements in the planning cycle and transparency, and to propose a budget that should be more in line with the views of Hampton's residents. I am sure we can all find some area we would change in a budget. But I believe the process does not stop at the vote by the school board. We need to continuously look at the budget by each school and department, and continue to implement best practices

With the possibility of state budget cuts in sports, including coaching staff salaries, the option of "pay to play" for sports has been suggested. What is your opinion on this?

Athletics are a vital part of extracurricular programs. Involvement in athletics teaches lifelong lessons on teamwork, physical well-being and sportsmanship. Involving students in programs like athletics keep them focused and engaged and they have less time on their hands to "hang out" on the streets. Athletics clearly play an important role in the college admissions process, even when vying for entrance to the top tier universities. We need to continue to spend our dollars efficiently and creatively explore how we can work with parents and the Booster Club and the community to support our athletic program.

It has been suggested that the school board is postponing needed repairs in some schools till they are so bad they need to be replaced. How would you prioritize the repairs needed at the schools.

I strongly oppose postponing needed repairs in schools. Schools building should serve as a safe and effective learning environment for our children to learn and our teachers to work. Postponing needed repairs, even cosmetic repairs, could potentially compromise the safety of our children or school division employees. It could also impact the learning environment. All children and employees within the division deserve well maintained, properly functioning and safe facilities.

If you could pick one thing the schools could be doing better what would that item be and how would you improve it?

From the outside it may be easy to pick what one thing I would change, but I'm aware that most change will have a ripple effect. Some change can appear beneficial on the surface only to be detrimental to the overall program. I want to ensure we maximize student achievement while providing a safe environment, attract and retain the best possible employees, and use the limited funds available as efficiently as practical. If I picked one thing it would be for schools to do a better job looking for redundancies that could be eliminated and efficiencies that could be implemented.



Sharon H. Warren

Chesapeake Bay Seat A

Opponent— Joseph C. Kilgore

Email— swarren46@cox.net

What is your Educational background? What qualifications, certifications or skills that would be an asset in this position?

I earned a BA in Special Education, a Masters in Education, and a CAS in Educational Administration from Old Dominion University. In the last thirty-one years I have worked as a teacher, diagnostician, principal, and Director of Special Education. While in Hampton, I have served on many committees which provides me a strong global perspective of Hampton City Schools and a collaborative relationship with central administrators, principals, teachers, instructional assistants, and curriculum leaders.

What is your opinion of home-school children taking a class in public schools which the parent does not feel qualified to teach? What is your opinion on the home-schooled children participating in extracurricular activities in the public schools?

Even with the many resources that are available for parents on the Internet and through home-school associations, some students may want to attend public school to take courses that meet their needs. Home-school students are able to take up to 2 classes per semester. VHSL regulations do not permit home-school students to participate in extracurricular activities since a minimum of 5 public school classes must be taken in order to be considered enrolled in school. Without being enrolled in school, it is not possible to ensure that minimum participation requirements for grade point averages are met.

The state budget cuts are going to be a difficult issue for our local schools. What recommendations do you have to save money on the budget.

My recommendation is that contractual arrangements with outside agencies such as Alternatives, Marching Elites, and the Air and Space Museum be either eliminated or reduced. In addition, part time positions need to be reviewed and considered for elimination prior to any reduction in full time employees. When determining positions to be reduced, the staff directly providing services to students must be the last to be considered. In addition, I would review all supplements carefully.

With the possibility of state budget cuts in sports, including coaching staff salaries, the option of “pay to play” for sports has been suggested. What is your opinion on this?

I feel that activities fees should be imposed on those students who choose to participate in VHSL activities. However, I feel that the fees should be minimal so as not to keep any student from being able to participate due to financial circumstances since for many students these activities open the door for scholarships to colleges/universities.

It has been suggested that the school board is postponing needed repairs in some schools till they are so bad they need to be replaced. How would you prioritize the repairs needed at the schools.

Each year, the Director of Operations/Maintenance tours the school with the principal to determine the repair needs and the principal prioritized the requests. In addition, a replacement schedule is used for major systems such as heat/air conditioning units and roofs. I believe both the priorities of the building principal with the expertise of the Director of Operations/Maintenance should be used to prioritize the repair needs of each school and the division as a whole.

If you could pick one thing the schools could be doing better what would that item be and how would you improve it?

I feel schools could do a better job of ensuring that students are prepared for their next step in life upon graduation regardless if it is continuing education or entering the workplace. By requiring each student have a Life Plan beginning as early as middle school, students can be guided towards course work that assists the student to meet their life goals including specific electives, advance placement classes, dual enrollment, career courses, job coaching, etc. Following a plan will ensure that students have received the best preparation to assist in the next stage of their lives.



H. J. Godfrey

Hampton Roads Seat A

Current Incumbent

Opponent— Jennifer P. Phillips

E-mail— hgodfrey@cox.net

What is your Educational background? What qualifications, certifications or skills that would be an asset in this position?

I have been involved in public education for over 35 years. I have served as an elementary teacher, elementary principal, middle school principal, high school principal, and assistant superintendent in the Newport News Public School System. I am a graduate of Columbia University. I've served 12 years on the Hampton School Board. While on the board I have helped to champion choices for parents (Jones Magnet Middle School, early childhood education, and International Baccalaureate IB).

What is your opinion of home-school children taking a class in public schools which the parent does not feel qualified to teach? What is your opinion on the home-schooled children participating in extracurricular activities in the public schools?

I respect a parent's right to determine the setting for educating their children. I support the school board policy that has been in place for over ten years that allows home-schooled children to enroll on a part-time basis or to take a single course. We offer a variety of higher-level courses in our schools, taught by highly qualified staff. While I support providing a range of opportunities for home-schooled children within the public school setting, student eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities is governed by the requirements of the Virginia High School League.

The state budget cuts are going to be a difficult issue for our local schools. What recommendations do you have to save money on the budget.

Having a systematic process by which we make cost saving reduction decisions is critical. Funds that go directly into the classroom should be protected. With the Standards of Quality or other mandates, a careful examination as to whether we are contributing over the funding level that is required is needed. If contributions exceed the requirement, a cost-benefit analysis should be conducted. Programs and initiatives must be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness, results, and costs so that we retain only those that show desired outcomes in terms of student achievement.

With the possibility of state budget cuts in sports, including coaching staff salaries, the option of "pay to play" for sports has been suggested. What is your opinion on this?

Given the current economic reality, I can support a fee being assessed to participate in the various sports offered in our schools. I support such a fee as long as it is reasonable and is not a deterrent for our students. I would also support the offering of "sports fee scholarships" sponsored by business partners or others who wish to assist in deferring the cost of this fee for those students for whom the fee is a barrier to participation.

It has been suggested that the school board is postponing needed repairs in some schools till they are so bad they need to be replaced. How would you prioritize the repairs needed at the schools.

Safety and security always come first when considering facility needs. Providing a secure environment for our students is a priority and includes exterior as well as interior modifications. Enhancing the learning environment is also a priority. This includes technology infrastructure as well as modernization of specific systems (such as HVAC) for the comfort of our students and staff and increased cost efficiencies. Finally, repairs that are aesthetic in nature and add to the "curb appeal" of our schools are an important consideration.

If you could pick one thing the schools could be doing better what would that item be and how would you improve it?

While we have increased avenues of communication with such supports as Connect-Ed, there is always a need to keep the flow of information timely and to seek opportunities by which we can gather feedback from not only our parents but also from our community. Increasing this flow of information also assists us in strengthening parental and community involvement. To improve communication we must seek ways to involve parents and others in such venues as community forums, work teams, and as members of various school committees. We could also look at innovative methods such as Facebook or Twitter.



Jennifer P. Phillips

Hampton Roads Seat A

Opponent— H. J. Godfrey

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What is your Educational background? What qualifications, certifications or skills that would be an asset in this position?

Graduated 1979. Kempsville High school, Virginia Beach. Attended Tidewater Community College, approximately 1 ½ years. Worked in private sector approximately 10 years. 1990 back to school, graduated DePaul School of Professional Nursing 1995. PTA President 3 years, PTA Council School Board Rep 2 years, Board of Directors Norfolk City Union of Kings Daughters, founding organization of Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters, 6 years. Developed Mercedes Car Raffle which raised over \$60,000.

What is your opinion of home-school children taking a class in public schools which the parent does not feel qualified to teach? What is your opinion on the home-schooled children participating in extracurricular activities in the public schools?

These parents pay taxes just like the rest of us. They should be entitled to receive the same services that we do. Their children are entitled to a free and appropriate education as stated by the VDOE. They should be able to participate in the public school classes that the parents do not feel comfortable teaching at home. I also feel that they should be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities. Usually it is the parent's decision to home school, not the child. I have always said; do not punish the children for the actions of the parents.

The state budget cuts are going to be a difficult issue for our local schools. What recommendations do you have to save money on the budget.

School administrators, their salaries, what cuts are coming from there? That would be a start for me. What kind of cuts are they taking? Perhaps they need to get back into the classroom and substitute, get into the cafeteria and monitor the kids. Sports funding. I realize how important sports are to the schools; however it might be time to look at the budget for sports, ask the families to pay fees – for sports and all extracurricular activities.

With the possibility of state budget cuts in sports, including coaching staff salaries, the option of “pay to play” for sports has been suggested. What is your opinion on this?

Having talked with many parents about this subject, I know that they are on board as well. Of course, there are those who cannot pay and they will be looked at on a case by case basis. Our Athletic Directors have been asked to cut back from 12 month to 10 month employees. They are not happy; they say that they have too much to do during those 2 months. Maybe it is time to give back for a couple of years until finances start to look better. If you look hard enough during the school day, you will find //

It has been suggested that the school board is postponing needed repairs in some schools till they are so bad they need to be replaced. How would you prioritize the repairs needed at the schools.

Not being part of maintenance, this is hard for me to answer, but I would certainly begin by looking at the issues that would directly cause harm to the students. In some of the schools the ventilation systems need a serious overhaul – this causes harm to all of the students and staff. Cost cutting measures need to be factored in there as well – lighting, ceiling tiles, heating, and air conditioning. There are many ways that these schools could be repaired, become “green”, cost efficient and safe!

If you could pick one thing the schools could be doing better what would that item be and how would you improve it?

Unfortunately, we are seeing more difficult children in the classroom and no real consequences to their behavior. Teachers are busy wrestling the child at the expense of the others education. They have no help in the classroom – it is a vicious cycle that I have personally witnessed. **I feel strongly that there is a way to improve this situation.** Find more money for instructional assistants. Hold the parent more accountable for their child's actions. **ALL** children deserve an education. They are the future; it is up to us to stand up for each and every one of them!



Linwood “Butch” Harper

Hampton Roads Seat B

Unopposed

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What is your Educational background? What qualifications, certifications or skills that would be an asset in this position?

Graduated from Norfolk State University (College) in 1978. BS Degree in Mechanical Design Technology. President/ Founder of Deen Ball Sports, Inc. (formerly Aberdeen Athletic Assoc.) a community youth organization since 1982. Youth Director BOO WILLIAMS SUMMER LEAUGE since 1983. Worked as school based substitute teacher in HPT and NN classrooms since 1994.

What is your opinion of home-school children taking a class in public schools which the parent does not feel qualified to teach? What is your opinion on the home-schooled children participating in extracurricular activities in the public schools?

There are numerous college educated parents who are not qualified or comfortable enough to educate their children at home. Those who make the choice to home-school their child, at the same time, take on the commitment to fully educate their child at home. To allow a home schooled child to participate in extracurricular activities, where numbers are a factor (i.e. athletic team), may preclude a public schooled child from participating. Most children need public involvement in order to one day deal with a very public world. While no educational system or method is perfect, public education allows a child //

The state budget cuts are going to be a difficult issue for our local schools. What recommendations do you have to save money on the budget.

We need to re-evaluate the “NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND” and SOL Testing criteria and the cost of other unfunded mandates. Instead of hiring outside consultants, etc. , we need to look inside our school system to find qualified people to solve our own problems. We could also provide, at a much cheaper rate, a stipend to those individuals.

With the possibility of state budget cuts in sports, including coaching staff salaries, the option of “pay to play” for sports has been suggested. What is your opinion on this?

There is a suggested \$5/ athletic fee associated with VHSL participates. My concern is this fee, like other fees, has the possibility of being increased. We need to be careful when we charge kids to play because one day college athletes may request “pay for play”, as their coaches do.

It has been suggested that the school board is postponing needed repairs in some schools till they are so bad they need to be replaced. How would you prioritize the repairs needed at the schools.

HCS has an excellent Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in effect. This program already has a valid priority list in place.

If you could pick one thing the schools could be doing better what would that item be and how would you improve it?

Childhood obesity problems could be handled better through proper nutrition and exercise. HCS already has an excellent food director in Dr. Julia Bryant and an exercise called P.E. As a substitute teacher in P.E. classes over the years, I know that many high school students don’t “dress out” for this very important class. The future of our country is also dependent on people with healthy lifestyles to run our country. A future healthy America will also ensure lower health care costs.