

VIRGINIA ORGANIZING

News from the Grassroots

August 2022 Issue 117



REGISTER TODAY!

VIRGINIA ORGANIZING

GRASSROOTS GATHERING

All Online!
Talent Show September 9
**Opening Meeting with
keynote speakers
September 10, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**

**WORKSHOPS
SEPTEMBER 13 - OCTOBER 6**

New workshops on Reproductive Rights,
Classism, Disability Rights, Mental Health
and Criminal Justice Reform, and more!
**ASL and Spanish interpretation
available on request**



Leaders speak with Senator Mark Warner

Senator Warner was visiting Southwest Virginia last week, so members of the Wythe County Chapter went to speak with him at his events.

Leaders thanked him for his work to get the IRA passed. They also urged him to stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

Denise Davis spoke with Senator Warner at the Lincoln Theater in Marion.

Grassroots Gathering 2022 - Now Online

Register now for the online Grassroots Gathering.

- Talent Show: Sept. 9 at 6 p.m.
- Keynote Speakers and chapter celebrations: Sept. 10, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- Workshops on Tuesday and Thursday evenings Sept. 13 - Oct. 6
- Final meeting: Oct. 8

Our keynote speakers will be Pam Yeung, a member of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors and Dolly Joseph, a racial justice and community aid organizer in Charlottesville.

We have lots of new workshops including

- REPROductive Rights,
- Classism,
- Disability Rights,
- Mental Health and Criminal Justice Reform
- and more!

ASL and Spanish interpretation will be provided at the mass meetings, and also in workshops if requested on the registration form.



Worker's Rights in Stafford

On August 27, the Fredericksburg Chapter and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fredericksburg hosted a town hall to discuss the exploitative working conditions Stafford County Public Schools custodial workers have experienced.

The workers have succeeded in causing their employer, ABM, to decide not to renew their contract with the schools. Now they hope the county will hire them directly.



Women's Equality in Suffolk

On August 29, the Suffolk Chapter held a Women's Equality Cookout with co-sponsor the Jakafi Behavioral Care Center, which passed out health care blessing bags to the community.

Emily Hamm, a legislative aide from U.S. Rep. Elaine Luria's office, attended the cookout. Emily spoke with the group about how the IRA would benefit women.

Elisabeth Chaves | Climate Equity Policy Fellow

Virginia Organizing's Climate Equity Policy Fellow, who started work this summer, lived through three hurricanes in Miami before moving to Virginia: Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. Wilma caused power outages throughout the city that lasted two weeks where she lived on the edge of Little Haiti. People in the wealthier areas of the city had their power restored more quickly. That was her first lived experience of climate inequity.



"Living through those storms, and also seeing what Katrina did to Gulf Coast communities of color, especially in New Orleans, made it clear to me that the climate crisis would have a greater effect on marginalized communities."

Trained as a lawyer, Elisabeth helped push for more affordable housing in Miami and worked on immigration issues in San Diego. In addition to her Master's in Urban Planning from Virginia Tech, she also has a BA in International Affairs from the University of Mary Washington, a JD from the University of San Diego School of Law, and a PhD in Planning, Governance, and Globalization, also from VT. She has taught classes on energy policy, land use law, environmental law, and community power.

Charlottesville Tool Library | Featured Community Partner

Have you ever dreamed up a repair or improvement project for your home or yard and then realized you're missing tools you need to get it done?



Maybe these are not tools that you would ever use again or would use only a few times a year. Maybe you'd rather not spend money on them, and then have them clutter up your storage space.

The Charlottesville Tool Library might be the solution for you! Just like a library for books, the Tool Library is the place to go to borrow tools, ranging from small hand tools to garden tools to more specialized power tools. It currently has an inventory of 550 items and counting. The library is staffed by volunteers, which includes a crew of "Tooligans," who are the resident experts who identify, inspect, repair, and teach workshops on how to use the various tools in their inventory.

The organization was founded by a group of volunteers in mid 2021, and Taylor Frome took the lead. The library opened its doors in March 2022, and is one of the newest groups to partner with Virginia Organizing through a Joint Plan of Work. Taylor's aim in starting the Tool Library is to empower the community while combatting consumerist throw-away culture by fostering a space for creative reuse and skill-building. She recently retired from working with Youth Build in Philadelphia, where she grew to love teaching hundreds of kids new skills that benefitted the whole community.

For Taylor, the library isn't just about loaning out tools. It is about building community and a new kind of economy. "Every time someone gets a tool I am building my cultural home. I love people who love tools and fixing things." The library draws inspiration from barter systems like time banks and skill shares and provides a kind of mutual aid that empowers people to do their own repairs rather than always buying new stuff or depending on contractors.

For now, the library operates out of a warehouse bay for three hours on Saturday mornings, but Taylor hopes this will change. "I want this to be an institution and not a start-up. I want it to be parallel to the library system." They are always in need of more tool donations, volunteers, and members. Taylor envisions a full-time staff with regular workshops for the public offered from a permanent secure facility. Membership in the library is on a sliding-scale, and you can sign out items through their easy online booking system. To learn more about how you can participate and borrow tools visit cvilletoollibrary.com.

Local Chapters and Areas Served:

Charlottesville/Albemarle County, Danville, Eastern Shore, Harrisonburg/Rockingham County, Fredericksburg, Lee County, Lynchburg, Martinsville/Henry County, New River Valley, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Richmond Area, Suffolk, Washington County, Waynesboro, Wise County, Wythe County

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