



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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STATE BOARD LETTER

Mid-June 2016

National Convention Time is Here!

at the convention – LWVMD for being a “**High Impact High Visibility**” League because of its work in redistricting reform, and LWV Montgomery County for its “**Roundtable on Civic Engagement**” project. Good luck to both!

This coming Thursday through Sunday, June 16 – 19, the **League of Women Voters of the United States** will meet in [convention in Washington, D.C.](#) If you can, be sure to attend this gathering, and prepare to be inspired. We are so proud that both the Maryland League and the Montgomery County League are competing for awards to be presented



Attention All Local League Officers and Program Planners!

A 2016 - 2017 LWVMD calendar is included in this *State Board Letter*, pages 9 and 10. As you gather for meetings or retreats to make your plans for the upcoming year, please be sure to refer to this calendar to avoid scheduling events on the same days as LWVMD's happenings – workshops, fundraisers, and other special occasions that we plan for the benefit of all Leagues. Also make note of fall and spring consensus deadlines and plan to hold meetings in the weeks previous to these two deadlines. Thanks!

SAVE THE DATE! Mark your calendars for **Thursday, September 15**, for our annual **Constitution Day** event. Check out the flyer on page 8 of this newsletter.

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



Our State Council Meeting was a great success, although we wish more of us could have joined together to set our course for the coming year. Hood College in Frederick is a lovely campus, perhaps a site for a future State convention.

Our speaker Dr. Barbara Brookmyer, Frederick County Health Officer, spoke of her role as not solely one of addressing health issues when they occur but of preventing disease and its effects. Her department is one of the first two health departments in Maryland to achieve national standards of public health accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board. You can see from the slides of her presentation on the state League website (www.lwvmd.org/council_2016). One of the findings they show is that Maryland's health ranking among the states has slipped from 16th in the nation to 18th and that high levels of air pollution is one of the tough health challenges facing Maryland today. . Yet our Governor has vetoed a bill which would require increasing the use of clean energy sources rather than the fossil fuels which are responsible for much of the contamination of our air. His objection appears to be based on the cost of developing clean energy sources as opposed to the cheaper continued use of dirty fossil fuels.

The Governor vetoed a bill just last week that sought to increase the use of renewable energy sources. "Hogan argues that while he wants cleaner air, the State

cannot bankroll the effort. Renewable energy sources are more expensive than energy from fossil fuels." ([Hogan steps back from clean-energy efforts, citing cost to consumers](#)) But one wonders, is it more expensive than treating asthma, lung cancer and other respiratory problems in addition to continuing to use fossil fuels?

During the last month, we have attended or heard reports about all the local Leagues' great annual meetings. (See page 7 of this *State Board Letter* for a listing.) The Harford County League heard from Del. Mary Ann Lisanti, who spoke of the most recent General Assembly Session and reported on the concerted effort of the Harford County Delegation to work across party lines. The Baltimore City League heard from City Health Officer Dr. Leana S. Wen, who trained as an emergency physician and is a Rhodes Scholar. She emphasized her role as an advocate of better health for the citizens of Baltimore and expressed her gratitude for the support of the League.

Now that most of us have completed the current League year and are setting our goals for the next, it is at last time for us to refresh and refuel for what lies ahead. A common saying these days is "The time you 'waste' at the beach (or the mountains, or traveling across the country or around the world) is not time wasted." Whether yours is a vacation or a "staycation," we hope you have a great time and return ready to take on the demands of a busy election season.

You have the satisfaction of a year of accomplishment and the excitement of an election coming up. Guaranteed---it will be interesting.

Barbara Schnackenberg and Nancy Soreng, LWVMD Co-Presidents

LWVMD COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS, MAY 21, 2016



WELCOME: A welcome to Frederick County was given by **Melanie Cox**, president of the Frederick LWV.

ROLL CALL OF COUNTIES by **Elaine Apter**, LWVMD Secretary: Twenty-two delegates were on hand for the roll call, representing the following local Leagues: Ann Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Frederick County, Howard County, Kent County, Montgomery County, St. Mary's County, and Washington County. Delegates from Prince George's County were also in attendance.

LWVMD 2016-17 BUDGET: Most items stayed close to the same numbers from the 2015-2016 budget. Budget Chair **Ruth Crystal** pointed out some highlights:

- PMP went down due to a membership decrease.
- Income and expenses increased for State Convention, which is more expensive than State Council. However, National Council costs will be cheaper than National Convention costs.
- Fewer profits were predicted for the fall and spring events and workshops.
- Income was increased for Legislative Day.
- Insurance line is a turn-around for local Leagues.
- Office expenses are paid for from League funds, but LWVMD-EF reimburses LWVMD for half.
- ACLU gives a contribution for sharing the state office.
- Wares sales have increased.

Crystal moved adoption of the 2016-17 LWVMD budget as presented. Motion passed.

LWVMD-EF 2016-17 BUDGET SUMMARY. Crystal noted the following items:

- Expense for half the office costs
- Member contributions are higher this year.
- The cost of VOTE411 was covered in the 2015 – 2016 budget. Crystal reminded members that the state League picked up this cost for all the local Leagues.
- Investments are a variable, depending on the stock market.

A vote to approve the LWVMD-EF 2016-2017 budget will occur at the next trustee meeting.

ACTION: Crystal, Action VP, reported that 2,817 bills were introduced in the last Maryland General Assembly Session; 834 passed. She thanked all the *Report From State Circle* reporters, who managed to look at almost all of the bills introduced and covered many.

WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

JoAnn Ross, Program VP, presided over the first workshop, **A Membership Engagement Primer: Using Best Practices.**

Recruit, Engage, Retain.The first speaker was **Kathy Larrabee** from Anne Arundel County. Several years ago Anne Arundel had a 49% increase in membership, but within two years they had lost 20%. Retention seemed to be the problem, not recruitment. The finding was that new members were overloaded and did not have time to become comfortable with the League and its procedures. The AA League first tried to make new members feel connected by sending them a packet with a welcome letter, a publication about the League, a membership directory, and the last newsletter. This was followed up by a phone call. Notes were taken by the caller to obtain information about the new member's interests and material that could be used for a bio in a future newsletter. The new member was then assigned a mentor. Board members were then assigned a new member to call as an additional welcome. During voter registration training programs and registration drives, which are good venues to get new members involved, a new member was paired with an experienced person. Veteran members were also encouraged to accompany new members to events. The Anne Arundel welcome booklet is on their website – go to www.lwvaacmd.org and click on the LWV logo.

Food for Thought: Backpack Program for At-Risk Students. **Monica Butta**, Co-Founder of the Food for Thought Program, presented a program in Baltimore County where a network of affiliates provide weekend meals for insecure students, many of whom do not have permanent addresses. She stated that food insecurity could create health problems. The coalition's goal is to build up a community by building up its people. Backpacks are filled by the partners, which are paired with a school. The partners provide the easy-to-prepare food items. The filled backpacks are given to the students to take home on Friday afternoon. The League has helped the coalition by identifying and working on legislation that will promote the idea of providing food for the homeless.

Reaching Out to the Community, **Vicki Strella** from Montgomery County presented an overview of their civic engagement program, which evolved in response to the county's dismal voter turnout in the 2014 elections. Along with participation in Voter Registration Day, preparing information on the importance of voting, the League came up with the idea of civic engagement roundtables. With her colleague, **Zaida Arguedas**, Vicki invited community leaders from different immigrant populations. Twenty-five people showed up for the first meeting, many from groups that the League had not worked with before. They discussed the challenges and recommendation for increasing voter turnout among their groups. Some of the challenges mentioned were: new voters, lack of civic education, systemic barriers for voters, and news coverage. At the next meeting, the group heard speakers and broke into working sessions. The small working groups planned activities such as voter registration at festivals, speakers provided by the League on the importance of voting, and connecting with groups through social media. The program is up for an LWVUS award. Members were urged to go on the LWVUS website and vote for the project.

It was noted that LWVMD was also up for a LWVUS award for its work on redistricting and members should cast their vote for that project also.

Richard Willson, LWVMD On-Line Services Director, conducted the second workshop, **Making NationBuilder Work for Your League**. Willson presented a presentation highlighting ways that Web can help to grow local League membership. He posted the following links to PowerPoint and PDF versions of our two trainings at http://www.lwvmd.org/council_2016. Enjoy!

LUNCHEON SPEAKER: Barbara Brookmyer, MD, MPH, Health Officer, Frederick County Health Department. Dr. Brookmyer spoke on the status of the Affordable Care Act since its passage. She presented a PowerPoint program. A link to this presentation is on the LWVMD Website.

Speech highlights:

- Definition of health: The physical, mental and social well-being of an individual. Our health care system is not designed to help the social aspect of this definition.
- Public health care system is to prevent, promote and protect all in need.
- Health disparities affect groups of people with greater obstacles such as: age, race, ethnicity, and geographic location. Health care is only about 10% of the factors affecting a person's health. Other influences are genetics, social, environmental and individual behavior.
- In the future there is a potential to go backwards. States are paying more but the federal government is paying less. However, Maryland's health budget was reduced 31%.

Changes to watch for and considerations for the future:

- Medicare eligibility, network adequacy, reimbursement rates, donut hole, hospital readmissions, out of pocket expenses. – all of these bear watching.
- The uninsured rate in MD is 9.1%.
- A public health approach means seeking health *equity* as opposed to health *equality*.
- Consider the "impact on health" when looking at all legislation.
- Get to know your local health officer.

SUGGESTIONS TO THE BOARD: League should address the problem of getting out the vote for the homeless. Schnackenberg said that the homeless could use shelters as their address. Hybl asked for ideas for a possible location for a program in connection with the police study. More publicity should be given to VOTE411. Links to materials from Council can be emailed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Gruhl encouraged everyone to purchase their Capitol Steps tickets. They are cheaper on line than the evening of the show. She also reminded members that if they volunteer to work at the convention, they would receive a free ticket to the performance. Carole Conors stated that Lobby Corps members were on the Hill lobbying for FEC reform in the House and Senate. New corps members are always needed. The commitment is a monthly briefing and one or two days on the Hill lobbying on the issue and writing a follow-up report.

MADLINE ELLICOTT FOUNDERS FUND: LWVMD Co-president Nancy Soreng announced the establishment of this new entity, which it is hoped will eventually give the state League a more stable source of funding so that it can support local Leagues, e.g., helping print their *Voters' Guides* and continuing to purchase Vote411 for all Leagues. In a recent meeting the state board authorized seed money to start the fund. Contributions can be made with appreciated stock, money bequeathed in a will, setting up a monthly contribution, etc.

2017 STATE CONVENTION: Jane Hardy invited the state League to attend LWVMD's 2017 convention in Kent County from June 9-11 at Washington College.

Elaine Apter, LWVMD Secretary

LWVMD BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, JUNE 6, 2016

RETREAT

The first half of the meeting was a retreat. Soreng opened the procedures with an icebreaker, followed by the **adoption of a 2016-2017 LWVMD calendar**.

The board then went on to review the **Policies and Procedures Handbook**, including the **nonpartisan policy**, and **voted to approve**.

The board reviewed where to find information on their portfolios and chose local Leagues with which to liaison.

A discussion was held on succession planning for board portfolios.

LWVMD BOARD MEETING

Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Highlights:

Both our income and expenses are under budget at this time.

In previous years we have given \$250 donation to the Interfaith Center for our meetings. The board increased this figure to \$300.

Coalitions: Schnackenberg asked to be notified of any coalitions or summer issue planning meetings that might be going on during the summer.

LWVMD-EF TRUSTEE MEETING

Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Hetterick moved, Watkins seconded that **a corporate resolution to authorize T Rowe Price to change ownership names on four mutual funds from the "Maryland Voter Education Fund" to "The League of Women Voters of Maryland Education Fund."** This official name was changed in 2008, but never changed with T Rowe Price. **Motion passed.**

Watkins moved, Hardy seconded **that our treasurer review our investments and at the September meeting report back with possible adjustments. Motion passed.**

LWVMD ED Fund Budget was approved with the addition of the \$2500 Grant from LWVUS added to the grant income line and \$2500 added to a new expense line, entitled Naturalization Project.

Elaine Apter, LWVMD Secretary

Your League, Working for Change

During this past Legislative Session 18 League reporters followed several legislative areas, prioritized by our local Leagues. Our reporters kept us abreast of 291 bills, and testified 71 times! Hats off to all them and to **Action Chair Ruth Crystal**. For a complete recap of the 2016 Session, be sure to read the next *LWVMD Voter*, which is coming soon.



ANNUAL MEETING



Local League Annual Meeting Round-Up!

Here's when and where your fellow Leagues have met, or plan to meet, as well as information about speakers and topics.

Anne Arundel	April 30	Brunch at Bay Woods of Annapolis, Dr. Pamela Brown, Executive Director, Anne Arundel County Partnership with Children, "Poverty Amidst Plenty"
Baltimore City	June 7	Dinner at Gertrudes' Restaurant, Dr. Leana Win, Baltimore City Health Commissioner
Baltimore County	June 11	Luncheon at the Country Club of Maryland, Shelly Rigger, Ph.D., "Are Female Voters and Politicians Breaking New Ground in Northeast Asia?"
Calvert	May 17	Dinner at the Chesapeake Golf Club Restaurant, Karyn Molines, Chief, Calvert County Division of Natural Resources
Frederick	April 30	Luncheon with Frederick County Council President Bud Otis
Harford	May 16	Dinner at Liberatore's Restaurant, Delegate Mary Ann Lisante, recapping the recent Legislative Session
Howard	April 21	Oakland Mansion, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin
Kent	April 20	Luncheon, Emmanuel Episcopal Parish Hall, Nancy Soreng, LWVMD Co-President, "Taming Maryland's Gerrymander"
Mid-Shore	May 20	Friends Meeting House, Ralph Watkins, LWVMD Voter Service Chair, leading a discussion about membership development
Montgomery	May 23	Potluck Dinner, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Prince George's	June 25	Morning meeting, Colony South Hotel and Conference Center
Queen Anne's	May 3	Dinner, Prospect Bay Country Club, historical re-enactor Mary Ann Jong, portraying Elizabeth Cady Stanton
St. Mary's	May 28	Meeting and luncheon at the Leonardtown Grille
Washington	May 31	Covered dish dinner followed by the screening of a documentary on Marilyn Waring, "Who's Counting"

SAVE THE DATE
10th ANNUAL CONSTITUTION DAY
PROGRAM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

Program 12:00 p.m., Reception 1:15 p.m.

**Ceremonial Courtroom
University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law
500 W. Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201**

**Presented By
League of Women Voters of Maryland
University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law
University of Maryland, Baltimore**

Topic and Speakers: Stay tuned...

**RSVP by September 13 to reserve seating and parking and to
volunteer or donate refreshments.
(Parking - \$7.00 for 2 hours. Carpooling encouraged)**

**Email your name, email address, phone and local League to
andreagruhl@aol.com
Questions? 301-328-1845**

Directions and Parking: From Route I-85 (North or South) take Route 395 (downtown Baltimore). Exit onto Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. staying in right lane. At fourth traffic light, turn right onto Baltimore St.; pass law school on left side of street. Turn left at second traffic light onto N. Paca St.; turn right into entrance for Baltimore Grande Garage, which is across from east side of law school. Parking building is for UMD Hospital patients/staff and law school faculty, but Constitution Day attendees who reserved a space will be accommodated.

League of Women Voters of Maryland Inc. 2016 - 2017 Calendar

2016

June

- 6 - Monday, LWVMD Board retreat and calendar planning
- 16-19 - Thursday-Sunday, LWVUS Convention

July

- 4 - Monday, Independence Day, LWVMD office closed
- 14 - Thursday, Elbridge Gerry Birthday Party, Annapolis

August

- 1 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 4 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 19 - Friday, *LWVMD Voter* deadline
- 26 - Friday, Women's Equality Day
- 26 - Friday, NCA Board meeting/retreat

September

- 5 - Monday, Labor Day, LWVMD office closed
- 12 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 15 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 15 - Thursday, LWVMD and UMD School of Law Constitution Day event, see flyer page 8
- 23 - Friday, VOTE 411 goes live
- 24 - Saturday, Fall Workshop, 10 a.m. Wilde Lake
- 26 - Monday, Local League Legislative Priority recommendations due
- 27 - Tuesday, National Voter Registration Day

October

- 6 - Thursday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake (note day-of-week change)
- 10 - Monday, *State Board Letter* Deadline
- 10 - Monday, Columbus Day, LWVMD office closed
- 23 - Sunday, Fall Fundraiser event
- 24 - Monday, United Nations Day
- 31 - Monday, Final local League Legislative Priority recommendations due
- Reception for NCA Presidents and LWVUS New Board - TBD on Friday evening mid or late October.

November

- 7 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 4 - Friday, LWNCA Board meeting
- 8 - Tuesday, Election Day
- 10 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 11 - Friday, Veterans Day -- LWVMD office closed
- 15 - Tuesday, *LWVMD Voter* deadline
- 19 - Saturday, Forum on Police and Community Relations
- 24-25 - Thursday & Friday, LWVMD office closed for Thanksgiving

December

- 5 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 8 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 9 - Friday, LWNCA Board meeting

15 – Thursday, Bill of Rights Day
16 – Friday, consensus reports on Primary System Study, Part I, due to LWVMD
24-31 - LWVMD office closed

2017

January

2 - Monday, New Year's Day observed. LWVMD office closed
5 - Thursday,, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake (note day-of-week change)
6 - Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting
9 - Monday, *State Board Letter* deadline
11 - Wednesday, 2017 General Assembly convenes
16 - Monday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, LWVMD office closed
20 - Friday, Presidential Inauguration Day
21 - Saturday, Winter Workshop, 10 a.m. Wilde Lake
28 - Saturday, Snow Date for Winter Workshop

February

3 - Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting
6 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
9 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
14 -Tuesday, League of Women Voters' 97th Birthday!
20 - Monday, Presidents Day, LWVMD office closed

March

1, 2, or 3 - Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, Legislative Day in Annapolis, TBD
3 - Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting
6 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
9 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline

April

3 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
7 - Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting
6 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
10 - Monday, General Assembly adjourns *sine die*
19 - Wednesday, LWVMD Lobby Day on Capitol Hill - tentative
21 - Friday, consensus reports on Development Rights and Responsibilities Study due to LWVMD
29 - Saturday, Spring Fundraiser event

May

1- Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
4 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
6 - Saturday, LWVNCA Convention
29 - Monday, Memorial Day, LWVMD office closed

June

2 - Friday, NCA Board meeting
9-11- State Convention, Washington College, Chestertown
11- Sunday, calendar planning with new board (at convention)

July

TBD by new board at State Convention