STATE BOARD LETTER  
April 2021
LWVMD Calendar

April
16 – Consensus Reports on Initiative Study due from Local Leagues
19 - State Board Meeting – 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM – Online Event
29 – Capitol Hill Day – Online Event

May
17 – State Board Meeting – 7:00 – 9:00 PM – Online Event

Planning your local league calendar? Click here to see the whole calendar.

Presidents’ Message

Although we are dealing with a busy General Assembly session until Monday, the board is looking ahead to our biennial state convention. We see some light at the end of the pandemic tunnel but are planning a virtual convention June 5th to be on the safe side.

With the help of our new state director, Nikki Tyree, we are casting a broad net in a search for our keynote speaker—ranging from Mayor Brandon Scott of Baltimore to Senator Tammy Duckworth or Stacey Abrams. With Zoom, dreaming bigger is affordable.

Another modification of our traditional convention is that we will consider the time before lunch to be “the first day” when agenda items are presented and questions answered (Program, budget, board nominations, etc.). The time after lunch will be “the second day,” the time for voting.

Zoom breakout rooms will allow us to have workshops on (1) New Approaches for Membership, especially for Local League (LL) treasurers and membership chairs; (2) Applying a DEI Lens to LWV Positions for LL action chairs and DEI volunteers; and (3) Conversations about Communications for LL members and leaders.

During the lunch break, members will have the option of participating in “brown bag breakout rooms” for LL Presidents, Treasurers, Program Chairs and Membership Chairs.

We invite you to continue the trend of increased attendance at state meetings because the base price will be just $10 and you won’t have travel or lodging expenses.
So let your LL President know if you are interested in being a delegate. You will have access to a digital “Convention Workbook” and final registration information in early May.

~ Lois Hybl, Co-President

The 2021 LWVMD Convention Will be Held on Saturday, June 5th, Virtually!

As noted above, voting to select the programs and studies that we will work together on over the next two years will be done by the delegates to the 2021 LWVMD Convention on June 5, 2021. We need your voice whether you seek to serve as a delegate or as a non-delegate attendee.

Let your local League leaders know of your interest in becoming a delegate! Every local League gets 3-4 delegates and larger Leagues get even more. (The table showing the delegate count by League was in last month’s State Board Letter, or just click here!)

State Director’s Report

Hello Leaguers! March is over and April, and the end of session, are here! This past month has been quite the whirlwind with learning about the League and all of you. While COVID-19 has created a new formal way of meeting people I am thrilled that so many of you have taken the time to chat with me and tell me how the League of Women Voters brings joy and value to your life. We don't lack passion here.

As much as I wish I could meet you all in person, and at the Capitol building, I have been able to settle in nonetheless - thanks to many of your tips and advice. I would like to give a special thanks to our Co-Presidents and the Board for extending themselves to me. I look forward to continuing our work together to strengthen our organization and embolden our members even more every day. Furthermore, my heartfelt gratitude extends to our administrative assistant Willow Goode and Anne Arundel County member Niecy Chambers. These two women have been extremely helpful and welcoming into the League.

Of course, I have to talk about the great receptions I have been getting at our local Leagues. Many of you have jumped at the chance to include me in your programming and talk with me about your county. Baltimore City and County recently put on a wonderful program, “Crisis in Local Journalism” that was riveting and informative. And of course, Alfa Stevens in Anne Arundel County is hosting the Affordable Housing talk. That is what I consider a cannot miss program! My hope is that more chapters will feel supported to put on these talks and lean on my office to assist them whenever needed.

Our coalition partners are excited to have a new staff member that they can associate with and bounce ideas off of in the future. I've had great conversations with Out for Justice on how we can support our missions to ensure that every citizen has the right and ability to vote. This will involve the League communicating with our communities about the right to vote and the importance of ease in voting.
We can continue our excellent partnership with Common Cause with Joanne Antione and I quickly becoming “partners in crime.” Common Cause has always been an important ally to LWVMD and we’re excited to continue that friendship. We’re even more excited about the growing relationships and all the new projects that we will be taking on together especially with redistricting coming up this year.

All of our Coalition partners have been more than welcoming and open to expanding our relationship. I have been so impressed how our members engage with each of these partnerships to make the voice of LWVMD heard. If I have learned nothing else, it is that we are a power to behold!

There are so many opportunities for us all to get involved and have our voices heard and not just with the organization. My hope is that we can get into our communities and teach every citizen that voting isn’t just a right, but a mechanism to be heard. That we can touch those who thought no one would ever care what they have to say. And that we can educate tomorrow’s leaders with a democracy first approach to governing.

I encourage every member to feel free to contact me at any time for any reason - even if it’s just to talk about ideas! I look forward to serving you.

See you around State Circle.

~ Nikki Tyree, Executive Director LWVMD

March State Board Meeting Highlights

- The LWVMD State Board has been working diligently preparing for the Annual Convention in June. They have outlined great prospects both for Workshops and a Keynote Speaker. Be sure you put June 5 on your calendar for a great Convention.

- The Board reviewed Local League suggestions for future Programs and Consensus. Thank you to all the Local Leagues who gave input to this valuable process.

- Updating the Policy Guidelines and Procedures booklet is an ongoing process but the Board has made great progress. Hopefully, when completed, this will be an invaluable resource for Local Leagues.

~ Theresa Freligh, Secretary

Program Report for March

- Thanks again for your on-time submissions of your Program Planning reports. The results will be in the State convention Workbook. If you have submitted an idea for a study, please contact me so that I can help you on a plan to present it at Convention.
• I have received several Initiative Study consensus reports. I know several Leagues have scheduled their meetings in the next week or two. The deadline is April 16, which is only two days before the State Board meeting. Therefore, I am requesting that as soon as you have your League’s consensus report finished, please send it to me ASAP. Thanks in advance for your help. If we have consensus on this study, a position will be presented at convention to be voted on by the delegates. Stay tuned. Eapter@lwvmd.org

~ Elaine Apter, Program Chair

Harford County LWV and the Girl Scouts

The members of the Harford County League of Women Voters, specifically Elaine Boram and Theresa Freligh, have been meeting with several Girl Scout Troops about Women’s Suffrage. Elaine, dressed as Suffragette Edith Houghton Hooker and talked to the girls on the importance of Voting. She described her life in the early 1900’s and how difficult it was for her to get the assistance she needed for her Home for Women in Baltimore. Edith realized she needed power and the VOTE was the one thing that would bring her power. She fought for Women’s Suffrage and succeeded. The girls then filled out a Girl Scout Voter Registration Card and voted. Some Troops had the girls vote for their favorite cookie while others voted for their favorite camping activity. They even had poll watchers! It was a valuable learning experience and fun for both of us and the Girl Scouts.

Theresa Freligh, Eileen Coffee and Elaine Boaram as Edith Houghton Hooker
Edith Houghton Hooker (1879 - 1948)

Edith was born in New York but came to Maryland to attend Johns Hopkins Medical School. It was there that she met her husband, Donald Hooker. After graduating and becoming a doctor, the two moved to England because Edith could not get a job in her profession in the United States. While living in England she saw the filthy and unhygienic conditions that people were living in. England was in the process of cleaning their streets in an effort to rid the country of Typhus and Tuberculous. When she returned to Baltimore, she started a Home for Single Women and Children because they had no place to go. She taught the women practical job skills and proper hygiene. She needed more money and help for these abandoned families. It was then that she began working for Women’s Right to Vote. Her mother and her niece, Katherine Hepburn, were active suffragettes in New England. Edith drove her car to rallies, held informational teas at her home, and became the Editor of the Maryland Suffrage News. She worked with Alice Paul and participated in many marches and parades until women were finally given the right to Vote.

It's Not Too Late!
Register for LWVMD Virtual Day on Capitol Hill - April 29th!

LWVMD is planning another Virtual Day on Capitol Hill for Thursday, April 29. This is also the LWVUS “Day of Action” and will most likely be focused on voting rights, including the “For The People” Act (H.R.1/S.1, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act), and D.C. statehood.

As we did last year, we will use Zoom for a series of meetings with the Maryland Congressional delegation of roughly twenty minutes each, including time for us to make our pitch and engage in some question and answer with our representatives (or their staff).

Please sign up to attend this FREE member virtual event on our website.

If you have questions, please contact Jackie Coolidge: jcoolidge@schoolbench.com

We realize that our work to make a difference and affect positive change through legislation not only affects our League members and the communities, they reside in, but it affects our neighbors throughout the state of Maryland. We appreciate the dedication and the wealth of knowledge that our LWVMD members’ exhibit. They are ordinary people from various backgrounds who strive to make a difference with others who share the same common goal which is to empower citizens to shape better communities.
Earth Day Event

Celebrate the 51st Anniversary of Earth Day with the Anne Arundel County League of Women Voters. All Maryland Local League members are cordially invited to a virtual presentation:

*Climate Change: Global to Local*
Guest speaker Elvia Thompson
Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 7 p.m.

Following a stellar federal career, Elvia Thompson has become an environmental leader, who is well-known for translating science into understandable fact; she brings expertise and clarity to the topic of climate change. She was trained by former Vice-President Al Gore’s Climate Reality Project. She works locally as President and Co-Founder of Annapolis Green to help communities create healthy and thriving environments. Solutions to an unprecedented climate crisis are required globally, nationally and locally. Learn how to help.

Please register here on the LWVAAC website to receive a Zoom link for the event. We hope to see you there. Program questions may be directed to Marg Duffy program@lwvaacmd.org.

Bylaws changes

As your League approaches Annual Meeting season, a committee will be looking at your bylaws. Please be aware that LWVUS expects our first 3 articles to mirror those of our parent organization. Article II is where the DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) policy should be incorporated. Here is the suggested format from the template national provides on their League Management site:

**ARTICLE II**
Purposes and Policy
Sec. 1. Purposes. The purposes of the League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.
Sec. 2. Policies. The policies of LWVMD are

1. Political Policy. The LWVMD shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
2. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy. The LWVMD is fully committed to ensure compliance - in principle and in practice - with LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.
Sad News and Updates

We were saddened and shocked to learn of the death on March 23rd, of Camille Baudot Wheeler, Co-President of the Baltimore County League, from pancreatic cancer. Ericka McDonald has stepped up as co-president of the LWV of Baltimore County.

Camille’s Obituary can be found here.

Update: The email address of the LWV of Howard County’s office has changed to: office-hoco@lwvmd.org.
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US

FOR OUR

VIRTUAL Annual Convention
10 AM, Saturday, May 1, 2021

There will be a Panel Discussion on latest Redistricting Plans in Maryland & Virginia, And an Update on Status of DC Statehood

Business meeting will include:
Approve Bylaws Amendments & LWVNCA Budget for 2021-2022, Adopt LWVNCA Program for 2021-23, and Elect Officers & Directors for 2021-23

In order to meet our quorum, at least 25 delegates must attend this on-line meeting. Once you have registered, you will receive the Zoom link to participate.

Registration is Free:
Register at http://bit.ly/2021NCACConv to receive the Zoom link

More information is on the LWVNCA website at www.lwvnca.org
Click on “May 1 Annual Convention” in menu on left, or go directly to page at: https://my.lwv.org/district-columbia/national-capital-area/event/save-date-lwvnca-virtual-annual-convention-may-1-2021