**STATE BOARD LETTER**

**Mid-December 2015**

**Calendar**

December
- 12 – Saturday, NationBuilder training in QAC
- 15 – Monday, Bill of Rights Day
- 25-31 – Friday – Thursday, LWVMD office closed

2016, January
- 1 – Friday, LWVMD office closed
- 4 – Monday, LWVMD Board meeting 10 a.m. Wilde Lake
- 7 – Thursday, State Board Letter deadline
- 8 – Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting 10:30 a.m.
- 9 – Saturday, Voter Service Workshop, Miller Library, 9421 Frederick Rd., Ellicott City, MD 21042
- 13 – Wednesday, General Assembly convenes
- 16 – Saturday, Voter Service Workshop, Queen Anne’s County Library, Centreville
- 18 – Monday, Martin Luther King Jr. Day – LWVMD office closed
- 23 – Saturday, Winter Workshop 10 a.m. Wilde Lake, see flyer enclosed
- 30 – Saturday, Snow Date for Winter Workshop
- 31 – Deadline for local Leagues to update their LWVUS rosters, see pg. 6

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PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGE

Dear Leaguers,

As we come to the close of 2015, we can’t help but reflect on the many accomplishments of the past year. Thanks to Susan Cochran, Pat Comella and the Eastern Shore local Leagues, we hosted a tremendously successful forum on Sea Level Rise in February. During the legislative session we submitted testimony on 83 pieces of legislation and held a very successful Legislative Day in March where members from Leagues all over the state came to visit their Senators and Delegates. In May, the Anne Arundel League skillfully hosted a wonderful convention that adopted three state studies, elected a fantastic board of directors and revised our by-laws. Over the summer, a team of volunteers launched a new Website that went live in October. Three trainings have been held to assist our local Leagues in getting used to this new platform and more are planned. We have an active team working on membership. They hosted a training in October and are reaching out to local Leagues to help them get up to speed on the new LWVUS data base system.

We see good things in the future for LWVMD and our local Leagues. We have adopted Legislative Priorities for The 2016 General Assembly session. Another article in this SBL will tell you how to see the new brochure that describes them. We have a workshop planned in early January to prepare our voter service volunteers for production of their primary and general election Voters’ Guides. At the end of January we will be holding our Winter Workshop. A flyer with more info is in this SBL. We are planning a great spring luncheon at the Cosmos Club with a tour of the Phillips Museum, which is right next door. Mark your calendars for April 30th! It will be a great opportunity to unwind after the busy preparations for the primary election in early April.

In closing, we hope you and your loved ones have a warm and joyous holiday season. And while the prospect for peace on earth and good will towards all seems rather dim at the moment, it’s something that we know we all long for and will do whatever we can to promote. That is what League members are all about and that’s why we love working with you all.

Barbara Schnackenberg and Nancy Soreng
VOTE411 WORKSHOPS

Every League is encouraged to send two people to one of the two VOTE411 workshops in January:

- **January 9 at the Miller Library, 9421 Frederick Rd., Ellicott City, MD 21042**  
  (driving directions will be sent before the event) or
- **January 16 at the Queen Anne’s County Library in Centreville, MD 21617**

At least one person from each League should bring a laptop computer so that we can access the VOTE411 site live.

The workshops will cover each step of the VOTE411 process, including how to: create a race (a description of the duties of an office); create questions for candidates for each office and email templates to invite candidates to respond to our questions; thank them for responding; and remind the non-responders to send in their answers.

To help us plan for the events, please register on the LWVMD Website – click on the Events tab and you will see them. Please contact Ralph Watkins at ralph.watkins1@verizon.net if you have any questions.

*Ralph Watkins, Voter Service Chair*

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LWVMD BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, December 7, 2015

**LWVMD**

Winter Workshop: Board decided to have two concurrent sessions for the January 23 program; one on the website and the other on redistricting. The cost for the day will be $25.00. A flyer is in the works.

Legislative Day: The format will be a little different; it will include a morning tour of the state government buildings, ending in the senate for those members who do not want to visit their legislators. Due to increases in food and room rental fees, the board approved a $30.00 cost for the event. Members who may need help with the fee may contact the LWVMD office and apply for help from the Lois Stoner Fund to cover all or part of the cost.

**LWVMD-EF**

Question for Vote411: Questions for national and state candidates for the Vote411 Primary Election were discussed. Watkins will email final version to the board.

*Elaine Apter, LWVMD Board Secretary*
AROUND THE STATE(S): SHARING IDEAS FROM LOCAL LEAGUES!

Looking to get younger voters in your community involved and energized? Here’s something that worked for one Maryland League.

The League of Women Voters of Montgomery County included professors of political science and American history at Montgomery College on its invitation list for its annual fall luncheon. One professor who immediately expressed interest was encouraged to invite ten interested students to attend as guests of League members. The keynote speaker for the luncheon was Dr. Jennifer Lawless, who talked about her recent book, *Running from Office*, and why young people today are turning away from public office and the political process.

Though the restaurant was a distance from the campus, not only did all ten students arrive early, two more came, not sure if they would even be seated (the professor offered to pay for them out of his own pocket). They were accommodated and one of them even joined the League. The students sat among members and guests and the interaction was wonderful. Several students asked meaningful questions, as they related personally to Dr. Lawless's talk.

In the spring the Membership Committee will be increasing classroom presentations at Montgomery College and the Universities at Shady Grove, and work with the Service Learning Program at MC.

Need a phone for your League but find the cost prohibitive? Try using “Google Voice”!

There’s an even better way to get your League telephone service. My League got telephone service through Google Voice. It provides a telephone number without an actual telephone (I think you can port over an existing phone number), which you can then set up to forward to any individual member’s phone number. The way we set it up, it does not actually cause the recipient phone to ring, it just goes into voicemail. Google Voice immediately sends an email announcing the receipt of the phone call, plus a transcript of what the person said on the call. This transcript can be garbled depending on the quality of the call or the clarity of the person speaking, so there is a link in the email message so that one can listen to the actual voice mail message. And this entire service is free!!!

*Tom Carson, President, LWV Glendale/Burbank CA*
*(kindness of Judy Morenoff)*
Your League In ACTION!

- We are a part of Working Matters Coalition, which is a separate entity from Working Families, which supports candidates.
- A report from the Center for Public Integrity gave Maryland a “D+” on opacity. We are part of a coalition, Marylanders for Open Government, that is working on the issue.
- We declined signing on in support of Sen. Mano’s Universal Voter Registration Bill. Although we support the concept, we expect there to be other bills and do not want to commit to which we support.
- The League signed a letter to Governor Hogan in support of welcoming Syrian refugees to the state and trusting the federal vetting process.
- We have agreed to support legislation on bottle recycling based on our positions on solid waste.

Ruth Crystal, 410-323-7164
ruth@cramercrystal.com
ruthcrystal.blogspot.com

Legislative Priorities Brochure

Our new brochure for the upcoming General Assembly has been posted on our Website (LWVMD.org) and can be seen by clicking on the Advocacy Tab, then Legislative Priorities, then 2016. Or, click here

Please note that the new date for the League’s Legislative Day is Tuesday, March 1, 2016. Stay tuned for details!
JANUARY 31st - Deadline For All Maryland Leagues

Your League’s online Database/Roster needs to be accurate as of the Jan. 31st deadline. LWVUS uses the “count” taken on that date to determine what your league will owe for PMP – Per Member Payment Fee. Members listed in your database on that date should all be active, paid members.

All unpaid members should be listed as “inactive” in your database at this time. Anyone in the “inactive” portion of your database can easily be reinstated to “active” should they rejoin at a later date. The advice is to never completely delete a person’s name from your League’s database – instead mark them as “inactive.” If it’s a case of a deceased member, then you will need to enter the date of death in order to remove them from your database/roster.

Make sure your database entries match the records of your League’s treasurer. If you are the treasurer and also manage the database, do have another board member check over your records.

Need more information on this process? You can call or email me – my contact info is listed below – or you can contact Linda Hamm, Office Administrator for LWVMD, at 410-269-0232, weekdays, between the hours of 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Betty J. Harries
LWVMD Membership Director
410-531-6402
bjharries@hotmail.com
LWVMD WINTER WORKSHOP

Saturday, January 23, 2016
Wilde Lake Interfaith Center, Columbia, MD
10431 Twin Rivers Road, Columbia, MD 21044-2331

9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Workshop fee of $25 includes morning coffee/breakfast breads, lunch, materials

9:30 Registration
10:00 Welcome
10:15 Workshops: Using the new website
   How to do a presentation on
   Redistricting Reform in your community
   These workshops will take place concurrently.
   Be sure that at least two members from your local League attend.
12:00 Lunch
   Speaker: Adar Ayira, Project Manager, Associated Black Charities
1:30 Adjournment

*Snow Date: January 30, 2016  Check LWVMD.org if weather is inclement.

WINTER WORKSHOP REGISTRATION FORM
(Deadline for Registration - January 20, 2016)

NAME ________________________________________________

LEAGUE ________________________________________________

Phone ___________________________ Email ___________________________

Amount enclosed: Workshop fee ($25 per person) _________________

Donation to the LWVMD Education Fund _________________
(Or donate on line: Go to http://www.lwvmd.org/join_donate)

Mail to: LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401
Or register on line - Go to http://www.lwvmd.org/winter_workshop_2016