STATE BOARD LETTER
Mid-April 2016

Calendar

April
11 – Monday, Sine Die - General Assembly adjourns
14 – Thursday, Early Voting begins, 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. daily
18 – Monday, LWVMD Voter deadline
21 – Thursday, Early Voting Ends
26 – Tuesday, Primary Election Day
30 – Saturday, Spring Event at the Cosmos Club – see flyer, page 7

May
2 – Monday, LWVMD Board meeting 10 a.m. Wilde Lake
5 – Thursday, State Board Letter deadline
7 – Saturday, LWVNCA Convention 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., see two-page flyer pages 8 - 9
11 – Wednesday, LWVMD Lobby Day on Capitol Hill – see flyer, page 10
21 – Saturday, LWVMD Council, Hood College, Frederick
30 – Monday, Memorial Day – LWVMD office closed

June
3 – Friday, LWVNCA Board meeting, 10:30 a.m.
6 – Monday, LWVMD Board meeting – Retreat/Calendar planning, 10 a.m. Wilde Lake
16 –19 – Thursday - Sunday, LWVUS Convention, Washington, D.C.

SIGN UP FOR OUR SPRING FUNDRAISER, APRIL 30!

Lunch at D.C.’s famous Cosmos Club with Washington Post political correspondent Karen Tumulty, who will speak about the 2016 election campaign. Enjoy an optional tour of the Cosmos Club premises after lunch!

Here’s the link:
Lunch at the Cosmos Club - LWVMD
PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGE

With April and its showers comes the opportunity to throw off the winter gloom and look forward to a unique opportunity to hear a truly rare speaker present an articulate, reasoned view of the election season from someone who has a front seat for the spectacle. On April 30th, we will hear from Karen Tumulty, national political reporter for The Washington Post, whose career has made her a long-time observer of our collective politics. Prior to her current assignment, she was a national political reporter for Time magazine. This is our opportunity to get above the rancor and name-calling of this election season to hear astute observations from someone who knows all the ins and outs of our national pastime – and we do not mean baseball. After all, baseball is seasonal but our politics has evolved into a year-round blood sport without a time out or any referee to call errors, balks or fouls of any kind.

Hearing Ms. Tumulty is icing on the cake, as we are able to hold this event at the Cosmos Club through the courtesy of our members, Klaus Zwilsky and Roberta Safer. They have graciously agreed that after lunch, they will conduct an optional tour of the Townsend House, the home of the Cosmos Club. You will hear all about the house which is on the National Register of Historic Places. To save your place at this event, buy your ticket(s) and get more information at Lunch at the Cosmos Club - LWVMD. Family and friends are welcome. Do not forget to either reserve parking at the Embassy Row Hotel or plan to arrive at DuPont Circle on the Red Line and walk a few blocks to the Cosmos Club.

April is also primary month in Maryland, as everyone who works on voter service has on the top of their minds. All of the voter information for all races in Maryland on which so many people have worked so hard is up on www.Vote411.org. And many of you have also diligently prepared for forums. You can find a list of these at www.lwvmd.org/links_to_forums.

Finally April signals the end of the regular session of the legislature. We have had some remarkable achievements with environmental and voting rights issues. Our efforts at redistricting have not yet borne fruit. Keep an eye out for upcoming issues of Report from State Circle and The Voter to get the total picture of our efforts. April is an exciting month. We look forward to seeing you at the Cosmos Club.

Barbara Schnackenberg and Nancy Soreng, LWVMD Co-Presidents

MEMBERSHIP ROSTER MANAGERS

REMINDERS: Please keep your LWVUS database up to date, including member expiration dates, between now and the end of July. LWVMD is tracking changes in membership numbers during that period. We appreciate your cooperation. In Maryland, anyone wanting to join the LWV must join an existing local Maryland League or become a Member At Large with the Maryland LWV. Questions? Call the state League office 410-269-0232, email lwvmd@verizon.net or visit our website at www.lwvmd.org. LWVUS no longer offers memberships, but they do accept donations.

Betty Harries, LWVMD Director of Membership
April Board Meeting Highlights, 4/4/16

**LWVMD**

Registration deadline for our *Spring Event* at the Cosmos Club on April 30 was extended until April 23. An E-Blast will go out with a link to the sign-up page. There is also a link on the LWVMD website.

**State Council** will be in Frederick County at Hood college on May 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be two workshops, *Local League Success Stories* and *Making the LWVMD Website Work for You*. One will follow the other, so everyone will be able to attend both workshops. The cost will be $35.00.

**National Convention:** State has a wares table. Melanie Cox is coordinating this project. Please let her know if you want to sell anything at the National Convention. We also need volunteers to staff the table.

Our publication *Study and Action* is being updated.

**LWVMD-EF**

**LWVMD-EF Board voted not to change the debate policy** re criteria for candidate participation in forums.

**Grants:** There are grants available from LWVUS for Voter Service projects that LWVMD is already doing. Soreng and Watkins will work on writing up our activities to use to apply for the grants.

*Elaine Apter, LWVMD Secretary*

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**Busy Days for Voter Service!**

**Voters’ Guides and VOTE411** – The *Voters’ Guide* and its online version, VOTE411, are the most public face of the League and are greatly valued by voters - over 70,000 Marylanders visited VOTE411 in the 2014 election (only Texas had a higher usage that year and they are a bit bigger than Maryland, though they lack blue crabs). Many more are using the *Voters’ Guides* that have been printed by many local Leagues. Thanks to the efforts of League volunteers across the state, VOTE411 went live on March 10 this year, providing information on candidates for every office in every county in Maryland.

We will keep an eye on Montgomery County, where two special efforts are underway. The Montgomery County Council, concerned about declining voter participation, awarded a grant to the Montgomery County LWV to send its *Voters’ Guide* to the home of every newly registered voter. A second project is to deliver the *Voters’ Guide* to the home of every voter in precincts with a history of low turnout. Many of those copies are being mailed, but League volunteers are wearing out their shoe leather delivering many door-to-door. Montgomery LWV will review the data from the Board of Elections to determine whether delivering the *Voters’ Guide* increased turnout.
**Candidate Forums** – In addition to producing *Voters’ Guides*, the League is serving the public through sponsorship of many candidate forums. To date, these have included candidates for the U.S. Senate, congressional districts 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8, and boards of education in several counties. Hundreds of voters are participating in these events and LWVMD has received compliments from other organizations on the quality of the formats organized by local Leagues. All forums are publicized on the LWVMD website as well as through VOTE411. Where video recordings are available online, we are providing links to those recordings from both VOTE411 and the LWVMD website.

**Same Day Registration** – Although voter registration closed on April 5, Maryland will be conducting same-day registration at early voting centers (only during early voting from April 14 through April 21, not on election day on April 26). Same-day registration allows those who have missed the registration deadline to participate in the primary, but those already registered will not be permitted to change party affiliation. To register during early voting, it will be necessary to provide proof of residency – preferably with a driver’s license or other official identification, but a utility bill or similar proof of residency may be used.

**Rumor Control** – During every election cycle misleading information about the election process starts to circulate. Nancy Soreng attended a meeting where someone claimed that those who register during early voting will be required to vote by provisional ballot and that those provisional ballots are not counted! That is inaccurate, as those who register during early voting will vote an ordinary ballot unless there is a truly unusual issue. As League members know, Maryland counts nearly all provisional ballots, disallowing only those where the person is not qualified. League members can help to squash these rumors by checking “Rumor Control” on the State Board of Elections website: http://www.elections.state.md.us/voting/election_day_questions.html, or www.elections.state.md.us.

_Ralph Watkins LWVMD Voter Service Chair_

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Here’s LWV Kent County’s VOTE billboard, 5’ x 8’, newly updated and ready to be mounted at a key intersection in Chestertown. Thank you, Betty Kerr, Francie Miller and Nancy Smith!
The Education Committee is possibly the longest continuously active program committee of the Baltimore County LWV. This committee has led LWVBC to positions on “Quality of Education,” “Early Childhood Education,” “Role of the Principal,” “Safe Schools, Safe Communities,” “Selection of Board of Education Members” and a neutral position that outlines the criteria that charter school legislation should adhere to.

This year, due to the concern and diligence of a new member, the committee became aware of the severity of poverty and food insecurity in Baltimore County Public Schools. With a school enrollment of over 111,000 students, over 52,000 receive Free and Reduced Meals (FARM), which indicates that they live in families who have an income below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. While these children receive breakfast and lunch in school, how do they receive food in the summer and on weekends and school vacations? While these children are not “starving,” they are definitely food insecure. This means that they often are not certain if they will have food or adequate food. Given this information and the fact that research indicates that hunger impacts learning and educational performance, the Education Committee decided to do whatever it can to get this information out to the public and to encourage organizations and faith-based groups to “step up” and commit to helping to alleviate hunger among the children attending Baltimore County Public Schools. As a start the Education Committee especially hopes to encourage the formation of “Backpack” programs. An organization or coalition of organizations “adopt” a school or schools and provide weekend food for those students who are homeless. The food is delivered each Friday in a bag or backpack to the school and the student picks it up. All is handled confidentially and the providers of the food do not know who the students are. Our goal as a committee is to seek out organizations and groups who are willing to commit on a long-term basis to becoming providers. The committee will also encourage government officials and BCPS administrators to use all available State and Federal provisions that provide meals and food assistance.

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1 Taylor-Mitchell, "Poverty and Food Insecurity In Baltimore County Public Schools", March, 2016
Recently two LWV members spoke before the Baltimore County Council regarding this issue. The Council responded by establishing a task force to study the issue. The Council then actually established a pilot program in four schools which will be implemented in the 2016-17 school year. LWVBC members were also encouraged to contact their state legislators as individuals to support SB756/HB1360, the “Breakfast After the Bill Act” and a second bill, SB755/HB1325, that would provide free meals to all students in qualifying schools.

Additionally, the Education Committee has been reviewing Maryland Charter School law in relation to our local Charter School Criteria neutral position. The Committee is concerned that charter schools not impact negatively on regular public schools.

In 2014 the Education Committee, working in coalition with NAACP, PTA Council, ABCSchools and individual citizens, testified in Annapolis, wrote letters to appropriate committees and spoke with our local delegation to gain support for changing from an all appointed board of education to a hybrid board with seven elected members and four appointed members. This year our committee testified in Annapolis and before our local delegation in opposition to an amendment to the Board of Education Bill that would have added an unnecessary step regarding the four appointed members. This bill was defeated within the delegation.

Judy Miller, Chair LWV Baltimore County Education Committee

It’s Annual Meeting Time!

Local Leagues are busy winding up their program years, electing new slates of offices, approving budgets, adopting programs. Here’s a list of dates for LWV Annual Meetings across the state; perhaps you might drop in to another League’s meeting and learn about their approach to League business! In case you want to learn more about times and locations, here are the presidents’ names; you may reach each one at Pres@localLeague.lwvmd.org, e.g.,

Anne Arundel April 30 Niecy Chambers and Susan Elson (Co-Presidents)
Baltimore City June 7 Diedre Badejo or Linda Rittelmann (Co-Presidents)
Baltimore County Jun 11 Camille Marx or Caroline Seamon (Co-Presidents)
Calvert May 17 Annette Funn or John Perryman (Co-Presidents)
Frederick April 30 Melanie Cox
Harford May 16 Stephanie Hallock
Howard April 21 Lillie Gallant
Kent April 20 Sandra Bjork
Mid-Shore TBA Janice Bain-Kerr (Convener)
Montgomery May 23 Linna Barnes
Prince George’s June 25 Atari Muhammad or Joyce Starks (Co-Presidents)
Queen Anne’s May 3 Barbara Sharkey
St. Mary’s TBA Kathleen Werner (Vice President)
Washington May 31 Richard Willson

Pres@AnneArundel.lwvmd.org
Join the League of Women Voters of Maryland

Saturday, April 30, 2016
at Noon
for
Lunch at the Cosmos Club

Followed by a tour of The Townsend House
2121 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington DC 20008

The Cosmos Club, one of the goals of which is the "advancement of its members in science, literature and art," has a long list of past and present distinguished members.

The Townsend House where the club is located is itself on the National Register of Historic Places.

Featured Speaker
Karen Tumulty
National Political Correspondent for the Washington Post

Insights into the 2016 Election


RESERVE YOUR PARKING EARLY!

OR

Travel on the Metro Red Line to DuPont Circle. The Cosmos Club is a 2 minute walk.

April 30, 2016 Spring Event

Name(s) ____________________________________________

Phone _______________________________ League __________________________

Email ____________________________________________

$75 per person for The Cosmos Club luncheon and optional tour

Optional donation to LWVMD

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY APRIL 23, 2016

Mail your check made out to LWVMD to:
LWVMD, 111 Cathedral St., Ste. 201, Annapolis, MD 21401
or make your reservation online at
http://www.lwvmd.org/lunch_at_the_cosmos_club
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA

Invites you to

Our 2016 Annual Convention
Saturday, May 7th ~ 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Clyde’s of Gallery Place Restaurant, Piedmont Room
707 7th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

The Future of Metro

Dan Reed
Consultant with Nelson Nygaard

Agenda
Registration at 9:30 will be followed by a buffet breakfast and the keynote presentation. Our business meeting will include election of officers, approval of our 2016-17 budget, and amend our bylaws.

Menu
Breakfast buffet with fruit, eggs, quiche, French toast bacon and sausage and assorted pastries.

Transportation
Clyde’s is half a block from the Gallery Place Metro station. Garage and metered street parking is available. More information on transportation is on the registration form.

Public Transportation
The Gallery Place Metro Station serves the Red, Green, and Yellow Lines. Take the 7th Street exit from Metro Station to either the “Arena” exit and walk right on 7th Street one-half block to Clyde’s, or take the “Chinatown” exit and walk left on 7th Street one-half block to Clyde’s AT 707.
REGISTRATION
2016 LWVNCA ANNUAL CONVENTION

Parking
Parking in the Gallery Place Garage with Clyde’s validation will cost approximately $25. See the rates below. The Gallery Place Garage is on 6th Street between G and H Streets. From the garage, take the elevator to the second floor. The entrance to Clyde’s is on the second floor just to the left of the elevator. Note: No turns can be made at the intersection of 7th and H Streets.

Discounted parking rates with validation:
up to 1 hour: $5.50 (with discount)
up to 2 hours: $11 (with discount)
up to 3 hours: $15 (with discount)
up to 4 hours: $18 (with discount)
4-24 hours $25

Metered street parking near Clyde’s is less expensive than the garage.

Registration

Cost is $40 per person. Provide a registration form for each person attending the convention. Make checks payable to:
League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area, or to LWVNCA.
Mail the form below and a check to:
Barbara Ewalt, 11037 Saffold Way, Reston, VA 20190.
Deadline for receipt of forms and checks is Friday, April 29, 2016.

LWVNCA Convention Registration Form----- (Please print) -----

Name: ______________________________________________________________

Street Address: __________________________________________________________________________

Telephone: __________________ Email: __________________________________________________________

Local or State League: ______________________________Delegate: (Circle one) Yes    No

Number of attendees: ___________________________ Amount of Enclosed Check: __________________
Join Maryland Leaguers

for

A DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

Wednesday, May 11, 2016, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

✓ Visit at US Senate and Representative offices
✓ Enjoy lunch together in staff dining facility
✓ Take part in advocating a LWVUS topic* (voluntary)
✓ Have fun!

*Participants will be briefed by email about the LWVUS topic for advocacy.

No fee!

Meet at Taxi/Massachusetts Avenue exit of Union Station, Washington, DC at 10 a.m.

Arrive at Union Station by Amtrak, Marc, Metro, bus or auto. If driving, one can park in Union Station’s public parking.

For questions, contact Carole Conors, 410-750-3960 home, 443-794-4678 mobile or CaroleConors@verizon.net. To reserve, contact Carole by email or LWVMD office at LWVMD@verizon.net by Sunday, May 1, and include street address, email address and cell phone number.

Name(s)__________________________________________Celi phone # ______________________

Email___________________________Street address (not P.O. Box) ______________________