



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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STATE BOARD LETTER Mid-March 2017

LWVMD Calendar

April

- 3 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 7 - Friday, LWNCA Board meeting
- 6 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 8 - Saturday, LWNCA forum on Affordable Housing, see flyer page 10
- 10 - Monday, General Assembly adjourns *sine die*
- 21 - Friday, consensus reports on Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreements Study, AND LWVMD Program Planning responses due to LWVMD – see page 7
- 26 - Wednesday, LWVMD Lobby Day on Capitol Hill, see flyer page 11

May

- 1 - Monday, LWVMD Board meeting, 10 a.m., Wilde Lake
- 4 - Thursday, *State Board Letter* deadline
- 5 - LWNCA Annual Meeting and Silent Auction – see flyer page 12
- 6 - Saturday, LWNCA Convention
- 29 - Monday, Memorial Day holiday, LWVMD office closed

June

- 2 - Friday, LWNCA Board meeting
- 9 - 11- State Convention, Washington College, Chestertown; see pages 3, 4, & 7
- 11- Sunday, planning session with new board (at convention)

SIGN UP FOR OUR 2017 CONVENTION!

Our biennial convention will be held **June 9 – 11, 2017 at Washington College in Chestertown, on Maryland's beautiful Eastern Shore**. The Kent County League will host this event and has put together some fun events for those of us arriving on Friday; see pages 3, 4, and 7 of this *State Board Letter*.

Our business meetings will take place Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon. We will hold concurrent workshops Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Topics for the workshops are: Using the NationBuilder Web-site Platform; Discussion: How Can LWVMD and Local Leagues Best Support Each Other?; Briefing - Primary Election Study Part II; and What You Need To Know to Be a Local League Treasurer. We are thrilled that Sheila Bair, President of Washington College, will be our keynote speaker at Saturday night's banquet, which will feature a buffet of "Chesapeake Specialties."

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



We continue to be impressed and thrilled by the dedication of League volunteers. Over sixty of you signed up for Legislative Day and your enthusiastic participation in the day's events was very rewarding to the organizers. To date, we have submitted testimony, all of which was initiated and written by volunteers, **on nearly seventy bills**. Our reporters for *Report from State Circle* have produced four issues and written about more than 250 bills. You have responded to action alerts, shown up at the Fracking Ban Rally and Redistricting Day. League members truly exemplify what it means to be civically engaged.

This urge to "do something" to improve democracy seems to be spreading as many local Leagues have experienced an up-tick in people interested in joining the League. They seem to want to learn more about how government works and how they can participate in making sure that policies and programs they care about stay in place. LWVMD and LWVUS are discussing strategies to help local Leagues make the

best of this exciting opportunity. We are planning to have a discussion about this at the LWVMD convention in June, but may be sharing information with you before then. Stay tuned.

This issue of our *State Board Letter* has information about a number of upcoming events that we hope you will have the opportunity to attend.

- On April 8th, the League of Women Voters of the National Capital Area is hosting a forum called "A Place to Call Home: Affordable Housing."
- Carole Conors will be taking League members to Capitol Hill to visit the offices of Maryland's members of Congress on April 26th.
- And the culminating event of our work year will be the LWVMD Convention from June 9-11 in beautiful Chestertown, Maryland.

More information about these events is in our newsletter and on our website LWVMD.org.

In League,

Barbara Schnackenberg and Nancy Soreng
LWVMD Co-Presidents

Save the Date: Summer Fundraiser!

**LWVMD is hosting a theatre party at the Olney Theatre
Sunday, July 23, 2017, 1:45 p.m.**

The play is "Thurgood," about Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, who argued and won the *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* decision, ending racial segregation in the schools, after a long and strategic journey that began with ending the "separate but equal" mandate in Maryland law schools.

Spend an afternoon with the late Justice at this one-man show, and consider just how far we've come... or have we? Stay tuned for more about signing up for the play.



2017 League of Women Voters of Maryland State Convention

Experience Chestertown

A Gem in "The Land of Pleasant Living"

Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Kent County

Choose among these events to start your Convention.

Friday, June 9, 2017

White Swan Tavern



2 p.m. Guided walking tour of historic Chestertown.
Optional tea and dessert at the White Swan Tavern following tour.



7 p.m. Summer evening picnic on the grounds of a Kent member's home (catered dinner, casual). Enjoy a meal with lovely water views.



7 p.m. Sunset Cruise on the Chester River aboard the Chester River Packet, includes casual cuisine buffet dinner. Check in beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the foot of High Street. Boat leaves promptly at 7 p.m.



7:30 p.m. National Music Festival at Decker Hall, Washington College – Brahms Piano Concerto, No. 2, in C, Deutsch 944, Schubert Symphony No. 9 in C. Nikolai Lalav, conductor, Michael Gurt, Piano. Dinner on your own in College dining Hall or restaurant in town.

See sign-up/reservations for events on page 4

LWVMD 2017 State Convention
Washington College, Chestertown: Friday, June 9 through Sunday, June 11

Deadline for reservation submission is Friday, May 19. Due to requirements by the College, any reservations received after the deadline will be charged a Fifty Dollar (\$50.00) late fee.

Please check below:

- ☐ 3 day/2 night package: Includes room and linens Fri and Sat nights, room key use, dining hall lanyard, breakfast Sat and Sun, lunch Sat and Sun, cocktail party and banquet ("Chesapeake Specialties" buffet) Sat night, early morning beverages in dorm, convention registration fee, and all meeting materials. **\$230.00**
- ☐ 2 day/1 night package: Includes room and linens for Sat night, room key use, dining hall lanyard, breakfast Sun, lunch Sat and Sun, cocktail party and banquet ("Chesapeake Specialties" buffet) Sat night, early morning beverages in dorm Sun, convention registration fee, and all meeting materials. **\$180.00**
- ☐ Day Trippers: (Sat and Sun sessions) Includes all meeting materials, convention registration fee, cocktail party and banquet ("Chesapeake Specialties" buffet) Sat night, dining hall lanyard, lunch Sat and Sun, refreshments during session breaks. **\$125.00**
- ☐ Banquet Only: For Banquet ("Chesapeake Specialties" buffet) and Cocktail Party Sat night. **\$41.00**
- ☐ Fri afternoon guided walking tour of historic Chestertown ending with optional afternoon tea at the White Swan Tavern. Tour starts at 2 p.m. **\$20.00**
- ☐ Fri afternoon "Dessert Tea" at White Swan Tavern in Chestertown. **\$8.00**
- ☐ Waterside Picnic on Fri. Summer evening picnic at the home of a Kent County member near the Chesapeake Bay. A casual, catered *al fresco* dinner at 7 p.m. **\$40**
- OR** (sign up for either picnic or cruise, but not both!)
- ☐ Sunset cruise on the Chester River aboard the Chester River Packet. Casual cuisine buffet dinner included. Cash bar. Boarding at 6:45 p.m. **(N.B.: Not available if you sign up after May 5.) \$30.00**

Another option on Friday night: National Music Festival presentation of Brahms Piano Concerto, No. 2 in C, Nikolai Lalav, Conductor, Michael Gurt, Pianist, at Decker Hall on the Washington College campus. Dinner on your own in College dining hall or at a restaurant in town. This concert is expected to sell out, so make a reservation early and pay at <http://nationalmusic.us/events-and-tickets/>

Total enclosed: \$ _____ Will you be a voting delegate? (Y or N) _____ (see pg. 7)

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

League: _____

Phone: _____

One dormitory has been set aside for our use. This is an all-suite dorm; each suite contains one bathroom and either 2 or 3 bedrooms. We will assign one bedroom to each person who attends. If you would prefer to choose your suitemate(s), please provide the name(s) in the space provided below. Linens will be provided, but you will have to make your own bed. A refrigerator on the first floor is available for medical needs and your own drinks. The dorm has 3 floors – an elevator is available.

Name of preferred suite mate(s): _____ and _____

Mail to: LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401

OR register online – Go to <http://www.lwvmd.org>. Click on Events and complete the form. Questions??
Contact Jane Hardy, janewhardy@gmail.com, 410/639-7811.

If you or someone you know would like assistance from the Lois Stoner Scholarship Fund for the convention fees, please contact the LWVMD office at 410-269-0232 or by email: lwvmd@verizon.net.

LWVMD Board Meeting Highlights, March 6, 2017

LWVMD

- Our investments are doing well and we are in a good financial position.
- Convention plans are coming along. With all the effort put into this event the entire weekend should be both fun and productive.
- *Report from State Circle* reporters have been working hard and have been successful in getting our ideas out to the public. We held a news conference on Redistricting Reform and participated in a “Ban Fracking” rally. Both events were well attended. The contacts made by members to their delegates and senators have borne fruit.
- DRRA study consensus reports are due on April 21.

LWVMD-Education Fund

- LWVMD-EF won a grant from LWVUS grant to help with voter registration at naturalization ceremonies.

Theresa Freligh, LWVMD Secretary

Legislative Day Wrap Up

On March 1st sixty League members attended LWVMD’s 2017 Legislative Day – probably the largest attendance for a League Legislative Day. Some members and friends visited their legislators to tell them about the League’s legislative priorities, while others toured the Senate and House office buildings and the State House, learning about how our state government operates.

We shared the feedback we received from our legislative visits and discussed key bills affecting our legislative priorities. **Warren Deschenaux**, now the Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services, explained the nuances of the state budget, the trends in both revenue and spending, potential impacts of federal actions, and potential legislative issues. **Toni Holness**, the Public Policy Director of the ACLU, discussed the status of bills on correction reform and sentencing.

Our day included a wonderful lunch, then some headed to legislative hearings and some headed home. We are grateful to **Senator Roger Manno** for sponsoring us for our reservation in the Senate building.

If you have ideas about how to make Legislative Day 2018 even better, please let me know @ ruth@cramercrystal.com.

Ruth Crystal, LWVMD 2nd VP and Action Chair



Toni Holness of the Maryland ACLU addresses League members on Legislative Day.

LWVMD Education Fund Wins LWVUS Grant

LWVMD-EF has been awarded a \$3,000 grant from LWVUS to continue its effort to register voters at the naturalization ceremonies held at the two U.S. courthouses and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service offices in Baltimore. This will enable us to provide each new citizen with important information about the election process in Maryland and about the services that the League of Women Voters provides to voters -- especially our *Voters’ Guides*. As noted earlier, the ceremonies at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service offices are held very frequently and **we welcome new volunteers**. If you are interested in serving as a voter registrar, please contact Ralph Watkins - ralph.watkins1@verizon.net.

Friday March 3 Was “Redistricting Day” in Annapolis!

At 10 a.m. on March 3, the Governor held a press conference about the legislation that resulted from the work of the Redistricting Reform Commission that he appointed. As you may recall, one the Commissioners selected was Ashley Oleson, the LWVMD Administrative Director. You can view a video of the press conference by clicking [here](#).



(from left to right)

Walter Olson, Senior Fellow, Cato Institute, Commission Co-Chair; Sen. Steve Waugh, R Dist. 29, Commissioner; Del. Jason Buckel, R Dist. 1B, Commissioner; Ashley Oleson, Admin Dir. LWVMD, Commissioner; Carol Ramirez, Commissioner; Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, E.D. Common Cause

Governor Larry Hogan; Tessa Hill-Aston, President NAACP Baltimore City, Commissioner; Judge Alexander Williams, Jr. Commission Co-Chair; Christopher Summers, Founder and President of Maryland Public Policy Institute, Commissioner.

At noon that day, LWVMD and Common Cause hosted a press briefing on Lawyer’s Mall. Background on a case before the federal Court of Appeals was provided by Steve Shapiro, the original litigant in the case. The co-chairs of the Reform Commission, two legislators, Jennifer Bevan-Dangle from Common Cause, and Nancy Soreng from LWVMD also spoke. You can watch the briefing by clicking [here](#).

Following that, hearings on SB 252/HB 385 Constitutional Amendment – Redistricting Reform Act of 2017 were held in both Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs and the House Rules Committees. The comments from the legislators were indicative of how much harder we must work to convince them to approve an independent redistricting reform commission – because it is the right thing to do.



Nancy Soreng, CO-President, LWVMD

More League Action: Participation in the “Ban Fracking” Rally on March 2



Maryland has an opportunity to be the first state to legislatively ban fracking, a.k.a. hydraulic fracturing. LWVMD continues to have serious concerns about the impact of fracking on the environment, water supplies, and the health of families and workers in communities where fracking is allowed. The MD house passed a bill banning fracking in Maryland last week with a veto-proof number of supporters. The bill now goes to the state Senate. We participate in the “Don’t Frack Maryland” Coalition, which sponsored the March 2 rally. Hundreds turned out to urge legislators to ban the practice in Maryland. A state moratorium on issuing permits to “frack” ends in October, 2017.

Getting Ready for Convention, June 2017

LWVMD Program Planning Process

LWVMD has sent local League Presidents the 2017-2019 Program Planning materials and timetable to assist them in conducting state Program Planning meetings. We look forward to hearing about your recommendations for updates of positions and ideas for a study or informational forum. Please send completed reports to both LWVMD@verizon.net, and JoAnn Ross, LWVMD Program Director, Jross.clemens@gmail.com, who will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Voting Delegates at Convention

Each League may send a number of voting delegates to Convention based on its membership numbers: Anne Arundel, 3 delegates; Baltimore City, 4; Baltimore County, 5; Frederick, 2; Calvert, 4; Harford, 3; Howard, 5; Kent, 3; Mid-Shore, 3; Montgomery, 8; Prince George’s, 3; Queen Anne’s, 3; St. Mary’s, 3; Washington, 3. However, ALL members are encouraged to attend and participate in discussions, workshops, and events.

Two Words

The two most important words to use to build your League are Visibility and Ask.

VISIBILITY

- V**
 - Be visible all year long
 - Voter service
- I**
 - Internships
 - International Relations
- S**
 - Set achievable short-term goals
 - Success provides opportunities to build
 - Strategize
 - Specific tasks
 - Safeguarding democracy leads to civic improvement
- I**
 - Improve
 - Identify opportunities
 - Identify leaders
- B**
 - Build relationship and partnerships
 - Build momentum
- I**
 - Initiate
 - Impact
- L**
 - Look for surefire projects that you can implement
- I**
 - Ideas: keep fresh
 - Initiate motivation
- T**
 - Take action quickly to remove barriers, human or otherwise
 - Talk often about change and your vision
 - Trendy Topics
- Y**
 - Year-round visibility
 - 97th Anniversary of LWVUS

ASK

- A**
 - Award people
 - Allow for success to motivate after you “win”
 - Analyze what went right and what needs improving
 - Address peoples concerns openly and honestly
 - Assess your League for strengths and weakness

-Acquire support from community organizations, government officials, and the press

S

- Story Bank
- Sign-up sheets
- Share success stories
- Strategic plan
- Social Media
- Safeguard Democracy
- Speak up and speak out

K

- Keep focused
- Know what you hope to achieve /accomplish
- Key step-ask individuals to join
- Kick-off the League year with a bang
- Keep ideas fresh
- Keep it simple

Betsy Grater, LWVMD Membership and Leadership Development Coordinator

Maryland's Connection to a Mathematician Depicted in the Film "Hidden Figures"

Mary Winston Jackson was one of the female African American mathematicians employed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia. These women were instrumental to the success of Astronaut John Glenn's space mission (orbiting the earth three times) in 1962.

Before earning a graduate degree, Ms. Jackson, then Ms. Mary Winston, taught math at the former William Sampson Brooks High School to African American students in 1942. LWV Calvert County member Malcolm Funn's father was the principal at W.S. Brooks High School when Mary Winston came to teach there.

Malcolm arranged for a meeting between one of Ms. Winston's students and a local reporter,



Mary Winston Jackson at NASA

Ms. Tamara Ward of *The Calvert Recorder*. A lengthy article by Ms. Ward appeared in the *Recorder* on Feb 24, 2017 – [check it out!](#)



**League of Women Voters of the
National Capital Area**

presents

***A Place to Call Home:
Affordable Housing Forum***

**What are the Challenges?
How are They Being Addressed?
What Can We Do to Help?**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2017
9:30am - 3pm**

**NRECA – National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
4301 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, Virginia 22203**

Member Leagues

LWV of the District of Columbia

**LWV of Frederick County, Howard County, Prince George's
County and Montgomery County**

**LWV of Arlington County, Fairfax Area, Falls Church and Loudoun
County**



Join Maryland Leaguers for



A DAY ON CAPITOL HILL

Wednesday, April 26, 2017 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. wearing walking shoes.

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 Monday, April 10, and include street address, email address and cell phone number.

Name(s) _____ Cell phone # _____

Email _____ Street address (not PO Box) _____



LWVNC A Silent Auction

Saturday, May 6, 2017, 9:30a.m.--1:00 p.m.

~~ Coinciding with LWVNCA Annual Convention ~~

Piedmont Room (upstairs), Clyde's at Gallery Place Restaurant

707 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

Join in the fun. Share the profits.

Each participating League in LWVNCA is eligible to make one official donated item to the auction. Creativity is encouraged for a League's choice of donation. Our 2013 **LWVNCA Convention Silent Auction** had items ranging from a homemade gourmet apple pie to a week's vacation in Florida. Items must be valued at \$50 minimum but there is no maximum value. Items are to arrive at the LWVNCA Convention Auction tables at 9:15 a.m. on May 6th. Each League will have a designated location on the auction tables. Bidding starts at ½ the item's value and increases by a minimum of \$5 increments. Bidding is open during the Breakfast, stops during the Speech, and concludes after 10 minute Break before Business Meeting. Highest bidders are announced at end of Business Meeting. Before departing the convention, winners pay check or cash to LWVNCA Treasurer Nancy Bliss. Profits are split with 50% to LWVNCA and the other 50% shared equally by participating Leagues. Leagues will receive their payment checks in the mail a few days after the event.

Entry deadline: April 15. To enter, each League President needs to email a description of their League's donated item and its dollar value to Auction Chair Andrea Gruhl at andreagruhl@aol.com using the message header, "**LWVNCA Silent Auction donated item from [acronym for your League].**" Questions? Andrea, cell phone, 301-328-1845.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Cheers,

Auction Committee: Andrea Gruhl (LWVHC), Gerry Whitley (LWVDC)