



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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STATE BOARD LETTER

July 2017

LWVMD Calendar

July

16 – Sunday, 3-9:00 p.m. Join us to rally for a fair districting process at the place of your choosing, or get on the van with us to visit more than one! 4 restaurants: 3pm Le Bistro du Village (district 3), 4:30pm Tark's Grill (district 2), 6pm Roma's Cafe (district 1), 7:30pm Greene Turtle Bar & Grille (district 7) 13 miles - One county - Four events - Cross Congressional district lines 5 times! [Click here for more information.](#)

23 - Sunday, 1:45 p.m. LWVMD Fundraiser, "Thurgood," a play about Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall at the Olney Theatre. [See flyer.](#)

August

5 – Saturday, NCA Workshops at National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) [Click here for flier for this free event...](#)

7 – Monday, 9-3:00 p.m. State Board meeting and retreat: First Evangelical Lutheran Church, 3604 Chatham Rd, Ellicott City, MD 21042. Yes, it is true, the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center will be undergoing major renovations for the next 6 months!

26 – Saturday, Women's Equality Day

September

11 – Monday, State Board meeting at FELC, 10:00 a.m.

18 – Monday, Constitution Day Event at Carey School of Law at noon. The topic will be "The 4th Amendment and Electronic Surveillance." **Hold the date!**

Planning your local league calendar? [Click here](#) to see the whole 2017-2018 calendar.

A President's Letter

League work does not stop or pause with a change in leadership!

First off, four studies were adopted at Convention 2017 in Chestertown!

1. Corrections and Bail
2. Civic Education
3. Services for the Aging in Maryland and
4. Death with Dignity.

[Click here to read more and to sign up!](#)

Second, within the first 36 hours, we were called on to review and approve

1. An Open Letter to Governor Hogan and the General Assembly: Affirming Maryland's Leadership in Addressing Climate Change
2. A sign-on letter from Consumer Health First entitled: CareFirst Proposed Individual Market Premium Rates for 2018
3. A letter to the Attorney General's office entitled: COMMENTS FOR INTERIM REPORT on the IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT
4. And then there was something about elections! Oh yes, While Ralph Watkins was out of town on vacation he drafted several letters for us but our Maryland Board of Elections beat him to it when they declined to turn over any of the information being sought by the President's Advisory Commission on Election Integrity.

Membership News: At Convention it was announced that LWVUS has agreed to help us simplify tracking membership by writing software that will enable us to upload Maryland membership changes from NationBuilder to the national database. This means that local leagues can now keep track of memberships in one place only" NationBuilder. A training document has been developed providing step by step instructions – if you are the local league membership director, download a [copy here](#).

And one last thing: We changed the home page of our website so that current events and news will post there automatically. This will put our best foot forward and save you some clicking around, we hope!

Elaine Apter and Richard Willson

pres@lwvmd.org

A report from National Council:

Meeting from Thursday evening through noon on Sunday, June 25, the 90+ participants in this year's LWVUS Council followed a professionally facilitated goal setting process that resulted in reports from 13 sub-groups. I was in the group that tackled "Defending Democracy". I thought our first cut at writing an elevator speech was on point: *Democracy is under attack by forces that diminish the value and impact of your vote. The LWV has an almost 100 year history of fighting for the ideals of democracy. We need to reach everybody with our message so we can match the levels of sophistication in messaging of those who mean to do our democracy harm. Democracy only works when everyone participates. We have a message of hope and truth that will repair the trust in the democratic process and we need to get this message out better than the opposition.* Our recommendation is to marshal our resources, hire a professional marketing firm and develop messaging that resonates with the electorate and be ready to begin training state and local leagues by LWVUS Convention in June 2018.

A membership option to get rid of PMP (the collection of dues using a Per Member Payment system), was advanced as a pilot option where all dues would be paid in through a national portal. Standard membership dues would be fixed at \$65 with \$30 staying at the national level and the remaining \$35 being automatically transferred to the respective State to negotiate a dues sharing plan with local leagues. This pilot would create a single action step for membership, recognizing that local leagues are moving painfully slow toward developing online membership options.

Other teams focused on recommendations for continuing work on a unified data system, simplifying the process for forming new leagues, a strong emphasis on inclusivity, ways to speak with one voice, methods for sharing best practices and enhancing trust. There was a lot of overlap between the various focus groups and on Sunday morning, groups were encouraged to check in with one another which resulted in a number of groups making joint presentations!

Richard Willson, Co-President

Convention 2017 was a great opportunity for leadership development!

Here are some insights shared by new board member, Liz Demulling:

The League of Women Voters Maryland held their 2017 Convention at the picturesque Washington College in Chestertown from June 9th to June 11th. Lively discussions culminated in the election of new officers, a new board, and the adoption of several proposed studies and action items. Amidst all the decisions and discussions, I still had plenty of opportunity for informal exchanges between local leaguers.



The Saturday morning session, which formally opened the Convention with kind introductory remarks delivered by William Pickrum, President of the Kent County Commission, was productive and efficient.

Saturday's lunch break was used as an occasion for workshopping. Attendees could choose a table based on topic, and then participate in a focused discussion around that concept. Being new to LWV, I was hoping for some clarifications on some of the issues I would be voting on the following day. I joined an informal discussion formed originally to focus on the preparation of the LWVMD Primary Election Study Part II presentation for the following day but was broadened to an overview of the process by which the LWV adopts and acts on studies. More experienced leaguers were helpful and supportive of new leaguers, like myself, while patiently and thoroughly answering our questions.



After the lunch break, outgoing Co-President Nancy Soreng presented a video to open a conversation regarding the many challenges facing local leagues. The Board of Directors is committed to working with the Local Leagues in addressing many of those concerns. Attendees then began to offer some of their most immediate difficulties while incoming Presidents Elaine Apter and Richard Willson recorded them to present to the board. Some of the recurring issues mentioned were engaging members, recruiting younger members, and fund raising.

A successful day behind us, we gathered for a reception and banquet. Each Local League had an opportunity to present a few successes from the past year during a Roll Call at the reception. It was wonderful to see each league take pride in their accomplishments as well as gain ideas and insights from the successes of other leagues.





Key Note Speaker Sheila Bair, President of Washington College and former chair of the U.S. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, was the highlight of the banquet, speaking about her experiences during the financial crisis of 2008 and the future of student loan debt.

Sunday morning provided a choice between two workshops. I

attended "NationBuilder: Using the League website platform for communications, and working with membership and donations," which

gave me the opportunity to acquaint myself with the technological tools of LWV. Despite that tech workshops are always a challenge, and especially so when there is such a spread of technological abilities among the attendees, I managed to learn to navigate NationBuilder and look forward to contributing my skills to my local league. (Calvert)



During the final plenary session, a new board was elected and the delegation voted to adopt four of the proposed studies discussed the previous day. There was also the presentation and adoption of two action items, and finally the

newly elected presidents received directions from the body. With the completion of business, the Convention closed, immediately after which the new Board met over lunch to determine the details of the 2017 retreat. I was inspired by the depth and breadth of leaguers' commitment to education and activism and am thrilled to begin work on the State Board.

JOIN THE
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND
AT THE OLNEY THEATER FOR

THURGOOD



By George Stevens, Jr.

Directed by Walter Dallas

Starring Brian Anthony Wilson as Thurgood Marshall

*"You do what you think is right and let the law catch up."
So said Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall,
who changed the face of American jurisprudence.*

*Spend an evening with the late Justice at this one-man show,
and consider just how far we've come... or have we?*

Sunday, July 23, 2017 at 1:45 p.m.

Open seating - Doors open at 1:15 p.m.

Olney Theatre Center

Maryland Route 108 (Olney-Sandy Spring Road), Olney, MD

Directions and Parking: <http://olneytheatre.org/more/plan-your-visit/directions-parking>

Tickets \$65

Limited number of tickets available!

Purchase Tickets At:

www.lwvmd.org/thurgood