



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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STATE BOARD LETTER

Mid-March 2018

LWVMD Calendar

March

28 – Wednesday, SCOTUS Rally – Tame the Gerrymander (see page 5)

April

2 – Monday, LWVMD Board Meeting, FELC Ellicott City, 10am

9 – Monday, Sine Die, Maryland General Assembly Adjourns

26 – LWVMD Lobby Day – A Day on Capitol Hill, (see page 7)

May

5 – LWNCA Annual Convention

7 – Monday, LWVMD Board Meeting, FELC Ellicott City, 10am

12 – Saturday, VOTE411 Goes Live

15 – True Grit Tour – LWVMD Spring Fundraiser, (see page 8)

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

Notes from the March Board Meeting

The League is working on Candidate Forums for the Gubernatorial primaries this spring. There are many fine organizations that want LWV expertise for their Forums. Among the issues discussed was our commitment non-partisanship and to remaining unbiased. As a result, the Board has affirmed that we will not be partnering in candidates forums with any organization that has or will endorse candidates in the election cycle.

We are looking forward to the fantastic [Spring Fundraiser, True Grit](#). This is an opportunity to

spend the day with some great people and learn about some spunky ladies. There is still time, so sign up today. The Action committee members are busily working to make both the League and the State a better place to be. Joyce has been seeking new items for our Wares. Be sure you check out some of these new items next month. Many of them are great for thank you gifts for speakers at your annual meetings. We are looking out for you and trying to make the League more user friendly. Let us know what we can do to help out your local League.

Theresa Freligh,
LWVMD Secretary
secretary@lwvmd.org

A Look at Legislative Day 2018



On March 6th League members filled West One in the Miller Senate Office Building to attend LWVMD's 2018 Legislative Day. Some members and friends visited their legislators to tell them about the League's legislative priorities, while others toured the Senate 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. For our speaker on the budget, we had "two for the price of one." Ryan Bishop, Director of the Office of Policy Analysis of Legislative Services, began the presentation about the FY2019 budget and the

structural budget outlook, revenue and spending, potential impacts of federal tax reform and potential legislative issues. After a delay due to action in the House of Delegates, Victoria Gruber, the new Executive Director of the Department of Legislative Services, joined Mr. Bishop for an extensive question period.

After we filled our luncheon plates, Nikki Charlson, Deputy Administrator of the Maryland State Board of Elections (SBE), spoke on Election Security. She described the many steps SBE takes, from constant scanning to protect against hacking from the outside, to the fact that voting systems are not connected to the internet. Ms. Charlson and Linda Lamone, Administrator of SBE, then patiently answered our many questions. Many databases are checked to insure that people are qualified to vote and cannot vote more than once. One participant commented that she now had good and factual responses to people who are concerned about illegal voters.



Afterwards, some headed to legislative hearings and others headed home. We are grateful to Senator Roger Manno for sponsoring us for our reservation in the Senate building, to Ralph Watkins for inviting Nikki Charlson, to Melanie Cox for arranging the catering, to our co-presidents for their leadership, to all the reporters for briefing us on legislation and especially to Ashley Oleson and intern Brielle Rozmus for preparing information for our folders. If you have ideas about how to make Legislative Day 2019 even better, [please let me know](#).

Lois Hybl,
LWVMD 1st Vice President
lhybl@lwvmd.org

1913 Suffragette March Reenactment



March 3, 1913 was the date of the first Suffragette march in Washington, D.C. This march shifted the efforts to obtain the right to vote for women, which began officially in July of 1848 at the Seneca Falls Convention, from being state focused to a national effort. In 1913, after the 65-year effort there were only 6 states where women could vote and most of those were in the west, with Wyoming leading the movement. Over 5000 people from around the world participated in the march; women, men, whites, blacks, famous names, and the average person participated together toward a common goal.

An area of controversy arose when the 22 women of Delta Sigma Theta sorority from



Howard University decided to participate in the march. Eventually, due to intervention by individuals, including women like Ida B. Wells-Barnett and several state groups, the march was integrated with black women marching in with various state and occupational groups.

The individuals in the march were jeered and efforts were made to disrupt the march resulting in over 200 individuals being injured. At one point, young men from the Maryland Agricultural College formed a barrier protecting the marchers from those wanting to disrupt the march. Still it took another 6 years for



congress to pass the 19th amendment which was ratified by the states in 1920. It took another 60 years for all states to ratify the amendment. Maryland rejected the amendment initially and did not fully approve the amendment until Feb 1958. Even with the ratification of the amendment there was still much work that remained to ensure that all women, regardless of ethnicity, were able to vote. Though it is one many take for granted, it is a right that must be valued and protected.

On Saturday, March 3, 2018, the Frederick County Alumna Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta sponsored a 105-year commemorative march. The League of Women Voters of Frederick County was proud to participate

with Delta Sigma Theta in this commemorative march. Other groups also participated, as well as individuals. [Watch a video](#) about the original march and the centennial reenactment.

The sharing of this experience with Delta Sigma Theta has been a wonderful experience for the Frederick League and is the beginning of an ongoing relationship to register voters and get out the vote. A continuation of something that began 105 years ago.

Melanie Cox,
mcox@lwvmd.org



Focus on a Local League



Anne Arundel County League: Mobilizing To Inform Voters

LWVAAC is determined to maximize the impact of its Annapolis-centric membership in reaching and informing voters throughout Anne Arundel County this election year. League volunteers who are both certified registrars and trained VOTE411.org instructors will offer their services to libraries and community centers in all parts of the county. In May, LWVAAC will host a panel discussion to address the public's concerns about election security. A videotape of the program will be posted online, and offered for viewing by other organizations and communities. Prior to the general election, our League will sponsor public forums for the General Assembly candidates in legislative districts 30, 31, 32 and 33, once again videotaping and posting each session online.

Internally, LWVAAC members are actively engaged in gaining a better understanding of our governmental institutions and our broader community. Under the leadership of Susan Cochran, we have reestablished an observer corps this year, with members attending and reporting on public meetings, and monitoring local governmental bodies for transparency. In addition, our members have embraced a Books for Learning program that has raised a painful awareness of long-standing social and political injustices in our country and locally. Members benefited last fall from meeting with Stephen Tillett, local author and president of the AA County NAACP, and we look forward to learning about the Anne Arundel United initiative from Derek Matthews, AA County Community and Minority Outreach Officer, at our upcoming annual meeting.

Niecy Chamber,
LWV Anne Arundel
vp2@lwvmd.org

Rally for Redistrict Reform

Tame the Gerrymander is rallying in support of the fight against partisan gerrymandering in the 6th Congressional district of Maryland ([Benisek v. Lamone](#)) AND BEYOND!

We will be joined by special guests affected by gerrymandering in MD - THE DISTRICTS THEMSELVES! They will share with you their troubles in ensuring all of their district residents have an equal say in government, and let you know what you can do to help fix this problem!

We'll also be hearing from Michael Kimberly, the attorney on the Benisek v. Lamone case, and other key actors in the fight for redistricting reform in Maryland.

OneVA 2021 will also be there to talk about how the fight for reform in Virginia is going, and the push to ensure fair maps in 2021.

Does your local LWV want to get involved and help support this effort? Why not host a sign making party in your area?! Contact Ashley at ttg@lwvmd.org to get information and materials to share with your party guests. If a TTG member can make it to your event, we'll help share updates on the situation in MD too!

Even if your League can't make it to DC, you can support us where you are by going live on Facebook on the day of the event, or just sharing posts and tweets with us all day on March 28th and tagging @TameTheGerrymander (FB) or @TameGerrymander (Twitter).

We want everyone to be able to get involved and show their support for Fair Districts!

LWVMD's Focus on Juvenile Rehabilitation is an Evidence-Based Solution

"How could a judge turn you into something that you're not?" was the question that Bryan Stevenson asked himself. In his widely



acclaimed Ted Talk, "[We Need to Talk About an Injustice](#)", Stevenson recounts his consternation and exhaustion as he stands before his fourteen year old client, clearly a child, and

wonders at the "magic power" the judge has used to turn this child into an adult in his courtroom. Stevenson goes on to describe how, in an effort to grab some of that "magic power" for himself, he files a motion to try his "poor 14 year old black male client like a privileged, white, 75 year old corporate executive."

[The United States is the only country in the world in which a minor can be sentenced to life imprisonment.](#) While the outlook is not as grim as in other states, Maryland's current policy falls short of being ideal. In the state of Maryland, youth between the ages of 14 and 17 who are accused of one of 33 offenses are automatically charged as adults. Bills like [HB102/SB198](#) seek to expand this list of offenses. These cases may be transferred back into the juvenile system pending an additional review.

There are a number of reasons why bills such as these are deeply flawed, starting with the simple

fact that developmentally, . MRI tests show that the prefrontal cortex which governs rational decisions and impulse control does not fully develop until the mid-20's, and an overactive amygdala encourages risky behaviors. The nucleus accumbens, otherwise known as the “reward center” of the brain is overactive, especially when presented with rewards in the form of peer acceptance.

Add to this mixture a combination of stress and trauma, environmental hazards such as [lead poisoning](#), an education system that fails to meet basic student needs like [proper heating](#), and [generational poverty](#) with a fast-disappearing social safety net, and it becomes clear that an increase of criminal behavior in youth (much of it survival based) is inevitable. In my own home of Baltimore City, a [2014 study](#) found that our youth face greater health risks and witness higher rates of neighborhood violence than impoverished youth in Ibadan, Nigeria.

In addition to punishing individual children reacting to social and policy failures, charging children as adults is [not effective at reducing crime](#). Being tried as an adult does not reduce recidivism; in fact, young people transferred to the adult system are 3 times more likely to offend than youth in the juvenile system. However, being tried in the adult system does reduce access to necessary mental health services, and sharply increases the risk of sexual assault.

These facts don't even begin to address a greater issue, which is that regardless of the defendant's age, the justice system is [heavily biased](#). And these racial disparities are not limited to prisons; they are present in what is often youths' first contact with government services: their schools.

Students of color are much more likely to be [expelled or suspended](#), and punished [more harshly](#) for low-level behaviors like dress code violations, defiance, and inappropriate language. These are the factors which push them into the [school to prison pipeline](#). In terms of juvenile justice in Maryland, African American juveniles are two times more likely to be arrested, ten times more likely to be detained, and 6 times more likely to be committed than their white counterparts.

The solution is simple: use data to scrutinize our disciplinary systems for racial biases, demand accountability for these biases from our schools and courts, and treat the symptoms of negative behaviors with age-appropriate services, with the goal of returning rehabilitated youth to family and community when they are ready. Bills like [SB669/HB827](#) establish a diversion program that seeks to provide these necessary services as an alternative to incarceration. Common sense legislation like this can turn the misguided systemic desire for punishment into opportunities for rehabilitation. Evidence based data shows that solutions like these work, which is why LWVMD [supports treatment programs and special services for juvenile offenders](#). Rehabilitation is better for our children, our families and our communities. Or, as Bryan Stevenson puts it, “We have a choice. We can embrace our humanness, which means embracing our broken natures and the compassion that remains our best hope for healing. Or we can deny our brokenness, forswear compassion, and, as a result, deny our own humanity.”

Jill Muth,
LWVMD Young Professional Policy Volunteer

JOIN US FOR OUR DAY ON CAPITOL HILL



THURSDAY, APRIL 26TH, 10am-3:30pm



- Visit both US Senate and Representative Offices
- Enjoy Lunch at the staff dining facility
- Take part in advocating an LWVUS topic*
- Have Fun!

* Participants will be briefed by email about the LWVUS topic for advocacy and participate voluntarily

THIS EVENT HAS NO FEE! BUT YOU MUST RSVP TO Carole & Ashley at capitolhilltrip@lwvmd.org.

LEGENDARY LADIES OF THE CHESAPEAKE

TRUE GRIT



Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Maryland, Inc., & League of Women Voters Prince
George County

Tuesday, May 15, 2018

Join us for a Tour of History, Fun & Adventure!

Come to the shore and celebrate centuries of legendary local ladies. Discover [Harriett Tubman](#) who led scores of people to freedom on the Underground Railroad. Then mosey on down to the home of Phoebe Anne Mosey, who shot her way to stardom as sharpshooter [Annie Oakley](#). [Bea Arthur](#), a Cambridge native, served as an early United States Marine, later becoming a comedienne serving up laughter as our favorite Golden Girl.

Meet your local step-on guide at the [Dorchester County/Sailwinds Visitor Center](#) and then wind through the picturesque rural landscape on Maryland's Eastern Shore exploring the childhood, teen and young adult years of Harriet Tubman's life. Visit the 1800's general store which was the site of her first act of defiance. Hear stories about her life as a slave, her family and escapes along the Underground Railroad in this area. Visit the Harriett Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center. Tour downtown Cambridge including Pine Street, Freedom House/Black House, Annie Oakley, Bea Arthur, Courthouse, High Street and Long Wharf (slave trading sites).

See Next Page for Details

True Grit Tour Details

Bus Options:

Baltimore - Meet at 6:45 am at Greenspring Shopping Center Parking Lot, 2801 Smith Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21209

Annapolis - Meet at 7:45 am at Riva Road Park and Ride

Stevensville - TBD

Lunch - will be included at the Portside Restaurant in Downtown Cambridge, MD with your pre-selected choice of grilled chicken breast or traditional Eastern Shore crab cake. Vegetarian meal also available.

****Tour package includes local step-on guide for a full day of touring, basic guide gratuity, Harriett Tubman Underground Railroad sites, donation/admission to Bucktown Village Store, lunch, meal tax and gratuity, guide gratuity, round trip motor coach transportation via Superior Tours and driver gratuity.*

Dinner - will be on your own at Cracker Barrel in Stevensville, MD

You may choose to make a \$40 deposit at this time, and **pay the full amount of \$140 by April 14th** to finalize your ticket purchase and reserve your seat.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Hetterick (410-935-5925) & Joyce Duckett at truegrittour@lwvmd.org

Reservation Form for True Grit: Legendary Ladies of the Chesapeake
Tuesday, May 15, 2018

Name _____ League _____

Email: _____ Cell Phone# _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Board bus: Baltimore _____ Annapolis _____ Stevensville _____

Special needs or Dietary restrictions _____

ENTRÉE CHOICE: Grilled Chicken _____ Eastern Shore Crab Cake _____ Vegetarian _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Mail checks to LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401
OR pay online at http://www.lwvmd.org/true_grit_tour

