

The Maryland Voter



Fall 2013

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The Maryland Voter is published tri-annually by

League of Women Voters
of Maryland, Inc.
111 Cathedral St.
Ste 201
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subscribe free online at
lwvmd.org/n/newsletter/subscriptions

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Dominion to build LNG terminal at Cove Point in Calvert County

By Klaus Zwilsky, Calvert County League Member

Dominion Power has applied to build a large addition to their Liquid Nitrogen Gas (LNG) import facility in Calvert County, MD to add a major LNG export facility. Exporting LNG is a far more complex process than importing, requiring much greater attention to environmental impacts.

The proposed industrial plant expansion is estimated to cost about \$3.8 billion to build and will be the first LNG export facility on the East Coast and the largest facility of its kind in the country. It will require 750,000 cubic feet of gas arriving at the plant every day (produced by fracking in other states), consume 1.5 million gallons of water per day, generate 1.4 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year with an application pending to increase that to 2.0 million. In fact, Dominion Power will have to buy carbon credits from other less polluting facilities. It will also require building a 130 MW natural gas-fired turbine power plant to *(continued on page 2)*

drive the main refrigerant compressors and produce power for the facility.

It is clear that the plant once operating will generate tax benefits for Calvert County, and State and Federal governments. The building of the plant will also provide several thousand jobs for the building trades over a 2.5-year period and about 75 additional permanent jobs when completed.

What is less clear is how environmental factors will affect Calvert County citizens. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is responsible for evaluating the safety and emission aspects of the new plant, and an Environmental Assessment will be evaluated by FERC. Many of the citizens of Calvert County are asking for a full Environmental Impact Statement (**EIS**) that would be much more stringent in evaluating allowable toxic emissions, carbon dioxide emissions, noise levels beyond the confines of Dominion's property boundaries, the building of two staging areas, one to bring in large components, the other as a huge parking lot for busing construction workers to the site over local country roads.

The federal environmental review is one step in a series of federal and state permits Dominion needs before it can begin construction. The Maryland Public Service Commission will hold its first hearings on the Cove Point project in mid-February 2014.



The Dominion Power facility in Calvert County is in background behind the trees. The page 1 photo is of the current facility.

League Requests Action on Cove Point

The League of Women Voters of Maryland will request an Environmental Impact Statement for the Cove Point project through our Governor, Senators and Congressmen, LWVMD President Susan Cochran said.

League of Women Voter positions on environmental protection and pollution control support close scrutiny of the project for its environmental impact. Rather than encouraging production of fracked gas, the League, with its allies, is supporting an increase in renewable energy to provide 40 percent of our energy by 2025.

Maryland Crossroads Touring State

LWVMD is cooperating with Chesapeake Climate Action Network to sponsor the Maryland Crossroads 2013 Tour to raise concerns about the Cove Point liquefied natural gas export facility.

The Maryland Crossroads 2013 Tour is promoting the far-ranging statewide benefits of upcoming legislation that would double the state's commitment to clean energy sources like wind and solar power. By raising the state's requirement for clean electricity to 40 percent by 2025, advocates say, the General Assembly would grow Maryland's economy while significantly reducing health costs borne by families and addressing the intensifying impacts of climate change.

League President Susan Cochran said the League is concerned about encouraging fracking in the northeast, environmental pollution by the facility, its effect on climate change and the sheer size of this facility that will export fracked gas to Asia.

To learn more about the impact of the Cove Point LNG, attend one of the presentations of the tour. Also, go to chesapeakeclimate.org for information.



From the LWVMD President

Our state of Maryland is a leader on many fronts. The League of Women Voters has been an advocate for successful legislation in social issues and environmental issues that have made our state an example for the nation.

We have work to do in the coming months to work with our legislators to further the goal of a healthy and prosperous state that serves its people well. We will work to have informed voters and further citizens' rights to easy and accessible voting.

You will receive action alerts to make your voice heard. Your voice to our legislators is critical.

Thank you for your support in all the ways that you offer it. Keep connected through our web site, lwmmd.org, check our Facebook.com /LWVMD and follow us on twitter.com @LWVMD.

I am proud to be your state president.

Susan Cochran

LWVMD Legislative and Budget Priorities for the 2014 Session of Maryland General Assembly

REFORMING THE REDISTRICTING PROCESS

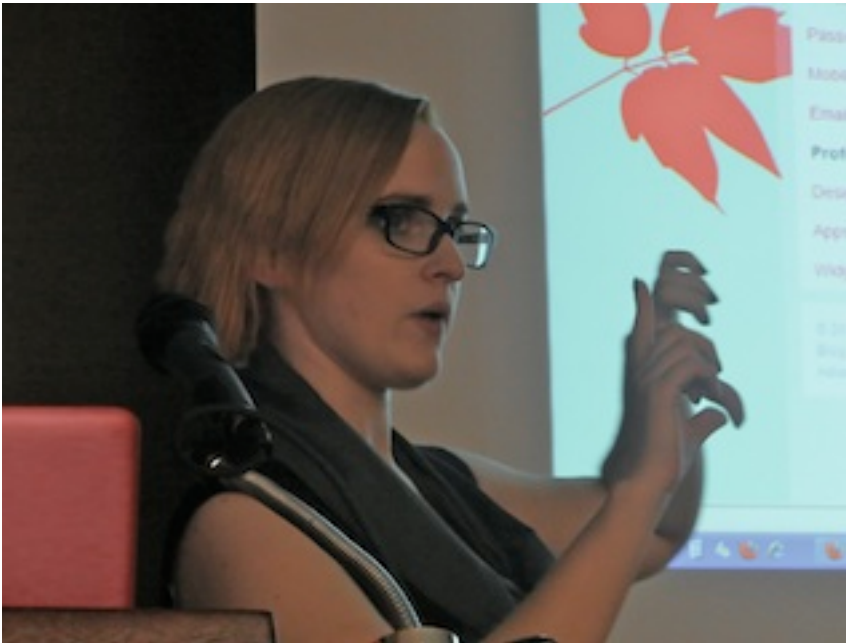
We support a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation in the state legislature and House of Representatives with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. Redistricting plans should be based on substantially equal population, geographic contiguity and compactness.

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY

We support protection of the environment through uses of clean and renewable energy, energy efficiency, water conservation, protection of the Chesapeake Bay and planning for climate change. We are skeptical of the processes of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) and liquefying natural gas because there is no transparency on the part of the entities which engage in these processes.

The League Continues to Work To:

- * Promote public access to voting while maintaining sound election practices
- * Increase the minimum wage
- * Reform marijuana laws
- * Assure adequate public school funding
- * Maintain and enhance transportation and related infrastructure



Alice Giles is not making shadow pictures but is talking about Facebook and Twitter to League members at the 2013 State Convention.

Maryland League Member Named to LWVUS Task Force

Have you heard of “YPTF”? Well, if not, it stands for *Young People Task Force* and Maryland is proud to have one of its members chosen to serve. Maybe you've been fortunate enough to meet **Alice S. Giles**, co-president of the Howard County LWV. She is a tech-savvy dynamo - delightful, bright, energetic, enthusiastic - and also known for her frequent changes in hair color. Once you've met her, you'll remember this talented young woman.

The YPTF originated through a combined effort of LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara and LWVUS staff in response to League's desire to attract a new generation of League leaders. The mission of the task force is to seek ways to increase LWV long-term membership sustainability with new young people.

YPTF is mainly comprised of five young members from around the country. To see the entire make-up of the task force and the three distinct goals/responsibilities of the group go to the LWV.org website. (Search on *Young People Task Force*.)

I spoke with Alice about a few aspects of the task force. Since their meetings are held through conference calls she mentioned that this method has its usual drawbacks, but “overall it has made it really easy to work across distances and with widely different schedules.”

Their first project was developing a report that was presented to the 2013 LWVUS Council. The final version has not been released. The long report included such sections as: Defining each generation, Seeing things from a younger person's perspective, and Best practices for recruiting and retention.

“My section focused on contacting leagues that had successfully recruited young professionals and to learn about the events, programs and advertising they did to do so,” Alice said. “Then, I took those projects and broke down which areas of the country could

(continued on next page)

easily replicate those initiatives, considerations regarding cost and time, an explanation of what it is about "Millennials" and "Generation X" that makes this appealing for them, and some examples of variations on the initiatives to make them family friendly or better for a rural community, and anything else I could think of."

Regarding her experience so far and what she personally hoped to achieve, "I like the opportunity to speak with League leaders throughout the country, and especially with others my age who really care about this organization. I'd like to achieve some changes in branding, marketing, and communication within the league at the national level and I hope to be a part of making those changes."

Thanks, Alice, for your willingness to help improve the sustainability of the League of Women Voters

Betty Harries
LWVMD Membership Director

LWVMD is participating in GivingTuesday Dec. 3.

Give to the LWVMD VOTER EDUCATION FUND

Each vote is precious--but its value is impaired when a voter lacks information on the candidates and issues. By watching candidate forums and reading LWV Voters' Guide (available for every county), voters can get information they need. Your contribution to the LWVMD Education Fund will help the League of Women Voters host the candidate forums and produce and publish the guides.

Strengthen democracy in our state! Donate today or do it on GivingTuesday, December 3! See our page on the LWVMD.org web site. And send your friends to the page. Any amount is welcome.

Donate online with the Paypal button at lwvmd.org or write a check to LWVMD Education Fund and send to LWVMD, 111 Cathedral St #201, Annapolis MD 21401.

Print or E-mail

If you receive a print copy of The Maryland Voter and would prefer to receive it electronically (or vice versa), please notify the League office at info@lwvmd.org.



Ralph Watkins practices casting his votes in a demonstration of a possible new system for Maryland voters

A View of a New Proposed Ballot System

On November 13, Barbara Sanders (Chair, Making Democracy Work Committee) and Ralph Watkins (MDW and LWVMD Voter Service Chair) attended a demonstration of an optical scanning ballot system at the University of Baltimore. The event was jointly sponsored by the State Board of Elections (SBE) and the University of Baltimore and featured a system developed by Dominion Voting Systems, Inc. After a long delay due to budgetary trade-offs, Maryland plans to replace its current touch-screen machines with scanned paper ballots for the 2016 presidential election cycle. Although other machines may be considered for purchase, this was the first one for which a demonstration was arranged.

The demonstrated system accommodates both visually impaired and voters able to directly mark a paper ballot, but there also are other interfaces available to cover multiple languages and tactile interfaces. A voter able to read and mark the provided paper ballot fills in ovals next to the names of candidates and responses to ballot questions at the voting booth with a privacy screen. Then, the voter feeds the ballot into a scanner slot below the writing surface. The small display will alert the voter if they had voted for more candidates than permitted and offers the chance to retrieve the ballot and exchange it to avoid an over-vote - or to cast the ballot if they don't care. The ballot scanner can also alert the voter if races were left un-voted, and return the ballot for the voter to complete the choices or to cast it as is. Once the voter pushes the "cast" button, the ballot is scanned and the scanner captures both the ballot image and a list of the choice(s) tabulated for each office on a paper roll as well as memory cards. The ballot automatically drops into a locked cabinet.

For voters needing assistance with marking the ballot, the accessible unit has a screen display of the ballot on which the type-size and contrast can be altered or an audio description of the ballot through a headset.

As a result of a study of alternative voting methods conducted in 2008-09, LWV Montgomery County adopted a position supporting the use of "instant runoff voting" for single-seat or executive office elections. Representatives of Dominion advised that their system can be programmed to support instant runoff voting, although this option is not part of the current EAC-certified options.

LWVMD joins Ag Coalition

Our League has joined a new coalition, the Maryland Clean Agriculture Coalition (MCAC). The coalition includes such environmental stalwarts as the Maryland League of Conservation Voters, the Sierra Club, Clean Water Action, EnvironmentMaryland, many Riverkeepers and others concerned with saving our waterways and the Bay. The coalition concerns itself mainly with the effect of farm practices on our waters.

The big issue right now is the large amount of phosphorous running off into the Bay from farm fields. The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) has ordered the use of a phosphorous management tool, PMT, so farmers can calibrate how much phosphorous is needed and control their use of manure. Manure is the main source of phosphorous from farms. The use of the PMT is controversial, and the date when farmers must use it has a been put off several times.

The coalition's mission is to work for "Regulations, incentives, and other programs governing the reduction of agricultural pollution (as well as those governing other types of pollution) should be equitable, science-based, verifiable, transparent and environmentally just." The League may sign on to letters and statements from MCAC at our discretion.

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Letter regarding Redistricting (Sent to the *Capital Gazette*)

The editor of *The Capital* asks if anyone is going to lead an effort to take redistricting out of the hands of politicians who draw districts for their party's benefit. The answer is "Yes."

The League of Women Voters of Maryland, Common Cause Maryland and the Annapolis Section of the National Council of Jewish Women are working together toward that end. These organizations are working with legislators for a first step - a task force to study a new process for drawing district lines.

We have launched a campaign called "Tame the gerrymander." In July, we held a commemorative birthday party at Lawyer's Mall for Elbridge Gerry, governor of Massachusetts, who was lampooned for approving bizarrely shaped districts. The term "gerrymander" was coined for the salamander-like shape of one of Gerry's districts.

The campaign is sponsoring a cartoon contest that will be kicked off at a dinner in Annapolis on Nov. 6 featuring local cartoonist Eric Smith. We are working to raise the consciousness of Marylanders that now is the time to fix the process, not 2020 when there will be only time for recriminations.

Susan Cochran, President, League of Women Voters of Maryland

Roberta Sharper Appointed to Governor's Commission

LWVMD board member Roberta Sharper has been appointed to the Governor's Commission for the Commemoration of the Adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment.



Ratified by two-thirds of the states in August 1920, the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote in the United States.

The Commission is to develop a plan for commemorating the events that occurred in Maryland connected to women's suffrage and the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It also must assemble an inventory of sites in Maryland that are significant to the suffrage movement, and develop a strategy to encourage tourism related to the commemoration.

According to the Maryland State Archives, Maryland initially rejected the 19th Amendment on March 26, 1920, despite a strong suffrage movement in the state. By May 29, 1941, however, the General Assembly chose to ratify it. Further, with regard to the Maryland Constitution, the General Assembly in 1956 voted to amend the document to expand the franchise so that it would not be limited to those described as "white male"; it was ratified by the voters, November 6, 1956.

Authorization for the Task Force extends through October 31, 2020.

Roberta is a retired Baltimore City School biology teacher. She was recognized as Teacher of the Year in 1987 and Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 1989. She won an African American Lutheran Award in 2000 and a Humanitarian Award from Roots of Scouting in 2005. She has worked with the Lutheran World Relief in East Africa and was a People to People Ambassador to China in 2007.

She is a member of Augsburg Evangelical Lutheran Church and Lambda Kappa Mu Sorority.

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LWVMD Premiers Public Service Announcement TV Campaign

LWVMD has launched a TV campaign to build awareness for the league, highlight key league issues and promote membership. The campaign was born out of a prize that Sherry Hyman won at a WBAL-TV media event in 2012. She won \$10,000 worth of airtime to be used by the end of 2013. The question was how to best use it. After much discussion with her husband Jon, who is in the advertising and marketing business, and league President Susan Cochran, the idea of a LWVMD TV spot and campaign was launched. *(Continued on next page)*

With input from Susan and other league members, Jon Hyman wrote the commercial and it was produced by his company, The Breakthrough Group. The commercial was shot at ChessCommunications in Baltimore by David Simpson, a renowned Maryland director, cinematographer and photographer, and edited by David Hudson. All donated their time and expertise.

The 30-second commercial features league members Alice Giles, Yara Cheikh, Linda Rittelmann, Atari Muhammad, Betsy Singer, Lu Pierson, Paul Arnest and Susan Cochran. Besides the airtime on WBAL TV, LWVMD was also able to secure air time on WJZ, WBFF, WNUV and Comcast. The campaign will continue to run into January on these Baltimore stations so be sure to watch for it.

Constitution Day Program features LWVUS President

By Andrea Morris Gruhl, LWVMD Director

On Sept. 17, fifty Leaguers relaxed over dinner in the garden at the Baltimore Museum of Art concluding a busy LWVMD Constitution Day. Seven years ago LWVMD began a tradition of co-sponsoring a Constitution Day program with the University of Maryland's law school and the University of Maryland, Baltimore. The program is in the law school's Ceremonial Court Room.

The law school's current associate dean for research and faculty development has always worked with the League on the planning for the annual event. This year it was Maxwell Stearns, Associate Dean and Professor of Law and Marbury Research Professor.

The format is a panel program with distinguished panelists expert in the topic annually selected by the co-sponsors. This year's topic was ***"The Supreme Court in Transition: New Rulings, including Affirmative Action, the Voting Rights Act, and Same-Sex Marriage."*** The law school's Dean Phoebe Haddon spoke on Affirmative Action. Professor Jana Singer spoke on Same-Sex Marriage and President of the League of Women Voters of the United States Elisabeth MacNamara talked about Voting Rights. Professor Stearns was the moderator.

LWVMD President Susan Cochran welcomed the attendees, which included some faculty and students, but was predominantly League members. Stearns introduced the panelists then set the topic. He said the Supreme Court is in transition. Fewer case decisions are being made. The Supreme Court decided 78 cases in 2012 and this was also the average from 2000-2012. But the number of Supreme Court decisions has gradually dropped. In the 1940s the Court made around 200 decisions per year. The Supreme Court currently is called the Roberts Court, in the tradition of naming it for the Chief Justice. However, it actually functions as the Kennedy Court. Citing the justices' voting statistics, Stearns said Justice Kennedy doesn't agree with the left or the right mostly but with either so he's in the middle, and 87 percent of the time he agrees with the majority in contentious, 5/4 decision cases.

Voting Rights

MacNamara, a retired district attorney from DeKalb County, Georgia, spoke about Voting Rights. Women who realized the 19th Amendment alone could not assure women the right to
(continued on next page)

vote founded the League of Women Voters. In the 1920s, and today, the states control the election laws in their jurisdictions. Leaguers were urged to do an inventory of laws that would be barriers to women voting. MacNamara said she has lived her entire voting life in Georgia. When she asked about Georgia election laws, she was told, "We don't have laws, we have customs." "Jim Crow Laws" were absolute barriers in the Deep South. Passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was built upon the 15th Amendment, changed that. The genius of the VRA was assurance of non-discrimination.

Affirmative Action

Dean Phoebe Haddon talked about Affirmative Action. She said that this Supreme Court is committed to formal equality. It is color blind and gender blind. Regarding the Supreme Court's recent decision on the Voting Rights Act, the formula used is flawed and Congress or the President should have stepped in. Chief Justice Roberts believes voting discrimination does occur but society has changed. Haddon said it is commonly felt we are in a "post racial" era now; others feel we should get over this idea.

Same Sex Marriage

The panel presentation on Same-Sex Marriage was by Professor Jana Singer. She said the Supreme Court had only 2 cases on Same Sex Marriage last term, the Windsor Case and the Hollingsworth Case. It did "reach the merits" in one case, the Windsor Case. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was signed in 1996. At that time, more than 1000 statutes and regulations defined marriage as between a man and a woman. DOMA prohibited the federal government from recognizing same sex marriages validated by the states and thereby denied many federal benefits to such couples or the widow or widower in such a couple. The Supreme Court ruled 5/4 striking DOMA down.

The other same-sex marriage case before the Supreme Court this year was the Hollingsworth Case. It was a challenge to California's Proposition 8, which held marriage is only between a man and a woman in California. A long District Court trial and lengthy decision found Proposition 8 in error. This was appealed in 9th Circuit Court, which found it was not for the state to decide. The Supreme Court vacated the 9th Circuit decision and upheld the District Court, which meant same-sex marriage is legal in California.

Singer said she thinks the Supreme Court will soon take another same-sex case.

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LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara, flew to BWI from Atlanta on Tuesday morning, September 17. She had lunch, held a 2 p.m. press conference at the law school, and then participated in the Constitution Day panel program. She was my houseguest in Columbia that night. The next day LWVMD President Susan Cochran and I took her to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in Annapolis, where she had a guided tour. After a sunny al fresco lunch with us on the Annapolis Harbor, I drove her to the BWI Airport. She was off to Atlanta for a day or two, then to California for a meeting. From there she was flying to a conference in New York City.

Andrea Morris Gruhl



LWVMD WINTER WORKSHOPS

Saturday, January 25, 2014*

Wilde Lake Interfaith Center, Columbia, MD
10431 Twin Rivers Road, Columbia, MD 21044 -2331
410-730-7920

9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Registration fee: \$25

Includes morning coffee/breakfast breads, lunch, materials

Two Workshops: (Choose One)

1. LWVMD Election Administration Study - Lu Pierson
2. LWVUS Agriculture Study - Elaine Apter



**Lunch
Speaker To Be Announced**

Directions:

From the North: Take Rt. 29 south to Columbia Town Center exit (Little Patuxent Pkwy). Bear right onto Gov. Warfield Pkwy. Take 2nd right onto Twin Rivers Rd. At first light turn left onto Trumpeter Rd. The Interfaith Center will be on your right.

From the South: Take Rt. 29 north to Broken Land Pkwy. Follow it West through 3 traffic lights to Twin Rivers Rd and turn left. Follow Twin Rivers Rd to 2nd light and turn left onto Trumpeter Rd. The Interfaith Center will be on your right.

***Snow Date: February 1, 2014. Check LWVMD.org if weather is inclement.**

WINTER WORKSHOPS REGISTRATION FORM

(Deadline for Registration - January 17, 2014)

NAME _____

LEAGUE _____

WORKSHOP CHOICE: LWVUS Agriculture Study Election Administration Study

Phone _____ Email _____

Amount enclosed: Workshop fee (\$25 per person) _____

I would like to make a contribution to the Lois Stoner Scholarship Fund _____

Mail to: LWVMD, 111 Cathedral Street, Suite 201, Annapolis, MD 21401
or call: 410-269-0232 or email: lwvmd@verizon.net

If you or someone you know would like assistance from the Lois Stoner Scholarship Fund for the workshop fee, please contact the LWVMD office.