

**BOOK II**

**League of Women Voters  
of Calvert County**



# **2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

## ***BOOK II***

### **REPORT ON 2018-2019 ACTIVITIES**

May 8, 2019

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### **A REPORT ON 2018-2019 ACTIVITIES**

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## Introduction

### to the 2018 Annual Report of the League of Women Voters of Calvert County

This *Annual Report* provides the materials for the annual business meeting of the League as well as reports of our activities for the past year.

- **Book I** contains materials for our May 8, 2019 Annual Meeting, including an agenda for that meeting, the Nominating Committee Report, Recommended Programs for the coming year, and a Calendar of 2018-2019 Activities.
- **Book II** is a comprehensive report on the Calvert County League's activities this past year. For ease of use, Book II is organized alphabetically – starting with the Calvert County Green Expo and ending with WOW (the Women of the World annual awards luncheon).

Please read these materials and bring them with you to the May 8, 2019 Annual Meeting. We encourage you to volunteer to work in areas that especially interest you.

Look for the latest updates on LWV activities at our website – <https://lwvcalvert.org/>. And please join us at our upcoming our informal *Wine and Wishes* and *Eggs and Issues* gatherings, and monthly meetings of the LWV Board of Directors.

Individual LWV members submitted the reports about their areas of activity. Sharron Bickel and Debbie Harris compiled and organized that information into this *Annual Report*.

**THE LWV (LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS)**  
**... is a nonpartisan political organization that**  
**encourages informed and active participation in government,**  
**works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and**  
**seeks to influence public policy through education and advocacy.**  
**Men as well as women can join the LWV.**  
**For more information about the Calvert County LWV,**  
**see <https://lwvcalvert.org/>**

## Green Expo

*June 2018 Submitted by*

*LWV Co-President Krista Boughey*

The League of Women Voters of Calvert County conducted a study and found a need for a citizens' group committed to alternative energy efforts. In 2007 and 2008, LWV member Dawn Balinski led a League committee that studied these issues and produced an October 2008 study that made recommendations to the County regarding "the greening of Calvert County." This recommendation resulted in the formation of the Calvert County Citizens Green Team.

The main event is the annual Calvert County Green Expo. On June 2, 2018, more than 100 vendors showcased green products, services, and programs.

The Expo typically attracts over 1000 attendees and 100 vendors/exhibitors. It is a chance for businesses and organizations that have incorporated sustainable practices into their operations and services to spotlight their efforts. The League had a table staffed by members and promoted League efforts. The LWV focus at the Green Expo was voter registration and showing the LWV flag at this well-attended public event. We handed out voter registration forms and a handout on LWV policy statements on environmental issues, including the hyperlink in text.

## Civic Education for Youth Advocacy Day Partnership

### Calvert High Schools Equity Teams, LWV, Our Common Calvert Library

*Submitted by Pat Pease Chair of the Civics Education for Youth Committee*

This project is designed to encourage high school youth to understand and participate in the development of the state legislative process. Starting in October during the lunch hour the Equity Teams meet with League members JC Hooker at Calvert, Malcolm Funn at Patuxent and Pat Pease at Huntingtown High Schools.

Other community members from Our Common Calvert and the NAACP also participated along with Equity Teams "sponsor" teachers to discern what topics of interest students want to explore. This year's topics included prejudice, discrimination, lack of civility regarding race and LGBTQ, immigration, environment/climate, education (Strong Schools) and college tuition.

In addition to "in school" preparation, several "After Hours" events are held to bring all high schools together for a social event and discussion with supporters of legislation of interest so that they are better able to address their concerns to local legislators when they go to Annapolis to meet with them in mid-February during legislative session.

This is the third year for this event, and each year improves significantly, built on previous experience. Each year has had 45 or more students developing and participating in the legislative process in addition to meeting and interacting with local state legislators. Plans are currently under way for next year's project.

## Gerrymander Workshop: What Does our Gerrymander Look Like?

*Submitted by Sharron Bickel*

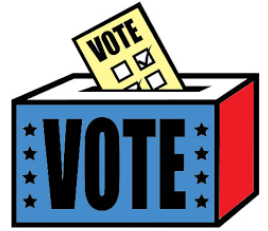
This fall (October 27, 2018 at Prince Frederick Library), the Calvert League participated in a workshop on gerrymandering as part of an initiative by the League of Women Voters of Maryland. Liz Demulling, a board member and the Calvert League state representative, gave a great lecture on gerrymandering, what it is and why it needs to be eliminated.

After the US 10-year census, voting districts are redrawn to ensure fairness in voting for the House of Representatives. Gerrymandering is redrawing district lines in such a way as to create a particular result (i.e., to create a reliable Democratic or Republican district). Liz explained clearly and eloquently the various kinds of gerrymandering and the importance to democracy of educating the public and ending this practice.

# History Fair Award on *Triumph and Tragedy in Voting*

*Submitted by Margaret Dunkle, LWV First Vice President*

National History Day (“History Fair”) is a nationwide effort for middle-and high-school age students to do rigorous historical research. Students can choose to do an exhibit, a performance, a website, or a documentary.



Each year there is a different theme. The 2019 theme was *Triumph and Tragedy in History*. Because voting is at the heart of our democracy as well as a core value of the League of Women Voters, the Calvert County League of Women Voters sponsored a prize for the best projects on *Triumph and Tragedy in Voting*.

Eligible projects eligible could look at any aspect of *Tragedy and Triumph in Voting* in the United States, such as:

- Decisions our founders made about who could – or could not – vote
- 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1870), which granted *African-American men* the right to vote
- 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1920), which granted *women* the right to vote
- Voting Rights Act (1965), which aimed to eliminate racial discrimination in voting by, for example, outlawing “literacy” tests
- Gerrymandering – creating voting district boundaries in a way that helps one political party over another
- Efforts to suppress voting – from yesterday’s *poll taxes* requiring that citizens pay a fee in order to vote . . . to efforts today to require official photo IDs or to have fewer polling places
- Effects of different systems of voting, such as the caucuses in presidential elections and “open primaries”
- Effects of social movements on voter turnout and outcomes – from protests against the Vietnam War to the #MeToo Movement

The winners of the League of Women Voters 2019 Award focusing on *Tragedy and Triumph in Voting*, both from the Junior Division and both from Mill Creek Middle School, were:

Jocelyn Hilderbrandt and Kacey Lowery for their project on the Woman's Suffrage

Olivia Bishop and Kamryn Jenkins for their project on the 15th Amendment.

*See photo at right for LWV First Vice President Margaret Dunkle with winners Jocelyn Hilderbrandt and Kacey Lowery.*



# **Legislative Evening with Elected Maryland State Delegation**

**November 14, 2018**

## **College of Southern Maryland, Prince Frederick Campus**

*Submitted by Cassandra Okwumabua, 2018 Legislative Evening Chair*

The Annual Legislative Evening provides an opportunity for community organizations, and individuals to share their legislative priorities with Calvert County's elected officials in Annapolis. It also gives Calvert voters an opportunity to find out what their representatives have accomplished on their behalf and what they hope to accomplish in the future. This past year's event was held on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, at the College of Southern Maryland in Prince Frederick. A total of seventeen community organizations pre-registered to speak with four organization/individual(s) signing up the night of event. As in prior year(s) the event was well publicized with attendance at 100+ by the general public.

Attending event from Annapolis were Senate President Thomas V. "Mike" Miller, Delegate Michael Jackson and Delegate Mark Fisher. Delegate Jerry Clark was not in attendance due to illness and newly elected Senator Jack Bailey due to scheduling conflict.

The evening started with each legislator providing their forecast for the 2019 Maryland General Assembly before fielding requests from the speakers. Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. stated "He was hopeful that as a result of the upcoming Supreme Court cases in North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland there will be a national goal for redistricting. He expects a plan in place next October if the court rules against Maryland."

The Delegation were met with numerous legislative and non-legislative requests to end gerrymandering, increase civility and decrease partisanship, and to support and fund numerous local, youth and educational programs. Some of the highlights from the evening included the President of the Calvert Education Association said "We will hold elected officials accountable to their voting record." Ms. Ostenso said "Our legislative priorities are simple. Fund our schools. Close the achievement gap. Make Maryland schools the envy of the country for providing a top education for all students."

NAACP member Malcolm Funn advocated on behalf of Calvert County Strong Schools and encouraged the lawmakers to invest in students by reading, understanding and implementing the Kirwan Commission recommendations. On the topic of road safety, Mason Road Community Group member Mary Ann Bell addressed the legislators. Bell detailed personal challenges and anxiety navigating safely between Mason Road and Route 231, the site of fatalities, and numerous accidents. She reported the predominantly African-American community's unsuccessful 18-year effort to get help at the local and state levels.

Delegates Jackson promised to continue to fight for funding dollars for Southern Maryland, noting he is the only one on the Appropriations Committee from the Region. He urged constituents to come to Annapolis and make their requests known. In response to the many concerns about growth, traffic and

land preservation, Del. Mark Fisher said, “I am not a big fan of paving things over. I’d like to see things slow down and roads catch up.” He also promised to send letter of support for Calvert Nature Society requesting funding for programs.

The evening could not have been a success without the teamwork of the League serving as timekeepers, manning the registration table, donating the wonderful refreshments, assisted with the room set-up; kept the paper flow with handouts moving as each group provided written comments for the Delegation; recording issues presented by attendees, publicizing the event, as well as ensuring that the Press Corp provided us with media coverage.

## **Membership and Membership Events**

*Submitted by Renita Alexander, Pat Hofmann and Sharron Bickel*

### ***Committee Activities***

This year the Membership Chairperson was Renita Alexander. She organized a “League of Women Voters of Calvert County Interest Meeting” which took place at the Prince Frederick Library on Saturday, September 22, 2018 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm). With the help of League members, the participants learned the relationship of our local League to the national and state leagues, our local League history, and the many volunteer opportunities. Four people indicated interest in membership. Plans to improve contact with new members are underway.

Roster Management: At this time, the League has 80 members. Renewals for 2018/2019 took place during the year. New members were added to the roster, and a number of former members were removed from the roster. Our local membership is maintained on the Wix platform, managed by webmaster Miriam Gholl. Every year, the roster manager updates membership with the national league that in turn updates the state league. So, our Calvert membership is maintained in two places, Wix and Salesforce (national platform.) This year the roster manager was Pat Hofmann.

Calendar of events: Members can find scheduled events on our website calendar ([www.lwvcalvert.org](http://www.lwvcalvert.org)), maintained by Pat Hofmann and Miriam Gholl.

Facebook: Members can join the conversation on Facebook. During 2018/2019 Miriam and Pat, (along with Liz Demulling during the fall) served as the administrators of the page.

### ***Annual Summer Social, Saturday, August 11, 2018***

Saturday, August , 2018, League members gathered at the Bayside History Museum in North Beach. The event was organized by Roberta Safer, Grace Mary Brady and Margaret Dunkle. Grace Mary, Director of the Bayside History Museum, led a tour of the museum with its interesting displays showing the early history of the Chesapeake Beach/North Beach area.

Members surprised Roberta Safer and Klaus Zwilsky (who, sadly, were in the process of moving to California) by presenting a “Proclamation” listing their many contributions to the Calvert League over the years, and thanking them for their efforts. The proclamation, drafted by Jim Winship, conferred a “Life-time Honorary Membership” in the League of Women Voters of Calvert County.

The group shared stories and laughter over delicious refreshments.



### ***Winter Holiday Party, Sunday, December 2, 2018***

League members gathered Sunday, December 2, 2018, for a great holiday potluck lunch organized by Grace Mary Brady and Pat Hofmann. The party was held at the Bayside History Museum in North Beach. Guests were entertained by Wyatt Garrett on the piano, followed by remarks by Dr. Ralph Eshelman on the War of 1812 and its continued relevance to the Calvert County Area.

The League thanked John Perryman for his many contributions (former president, co-president, Observer Team Leader, Transparency chair among others). He was given a “Proclamation” declaring his “Lifetime, Honorary Membership” in the League of Women Voters of Calvert County. (Jim Winship drafted the “Proclamation”)

Good wishes were given to John and his wife Gayle who are leaving the area after many years of residency.

#### ***Open Discussions for LWV and Citizen Input: Eggs and Issues (Breakfast) and Wine and Wishes (After Work Discussions)***

“Eggs and Issues” and “Wine and Wishes”, started in 2016, were conceived to provide regular gatherings in public venues where members and prospective members could voice their opinions on local and national issues, and let the LWV board hear from any and all who attend.

As in previous years, meetings alternate between morning and evening gatherings to accommodate varied work schedules. “Eggs and Issues” has been a Monday morning meeting (9:00 – 11:00 am) at IHOP in Prince Frederick for their “breakfast special”. The evening event, “Wine and Wishes” (5:00-7:00 pm), is at the Brick Wood Fired Bistro (60 Sherry Lane in Prince Frederick) during Happy Hour to take advantage of the Happy Hour prices for appetizers and drinks.

This year we’ve held fewer gatherings due to the packed schedule of the events organized by Voter Services for the 2018 elections and resultant exhaustion in the spring! Topics of interest were transparency issues re: the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, proposed Maryland legislation, and the difficulty and importance of maintaining the LWV reputation for non-partisanship.

## Observer Teams of the League of Women Voters of Calvert County

### *An Introduction to the League's Three Observer Teams*

*Submitted by Sharron Bickel*

Our local League of Women Voters maintains three separate observer teams – one each for the Board of County Commissioners, Board of Education and the Planning Commission. Our observers attend each of the meetings and, when life interferes, they watch video of the meetings. Through collaboration with team members and other the other observer teams, they focus on:

- emerging issues,
- the level of transparency, and
- whether the observed bodies are acting as honest brokers of information.

While meeting agendas and staff support materials are published in advance, the team members observe and report on the discussions and questions concerning the topics. Those discussion and topics can foretell future issues to be alert for. The three teams meet jointly approximately every three or four months.

### **Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Observer Team**

*Submitted by Sharron Bickel*

The Board of County Commissioners Observer Team, which has existed since 2009, has 7 volunteers, who were until December, 2018, ably led by John Perryman. Volunteers schedule themselves to observe each weekly BOCC meeting and other commissioner meetings requiring public notice.

The team meets periodically at the Harriett Elizabeth Brown Community Center to identify and review individual member observations. Through discussion, various issues emerge which shape the team's future focus.

This year the team was alert to possible efforts by the BOCC to change the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance to raise the criteria for overcrowding so that schools can increase their enrollment and still comply with the Adequate Facilities Ordinance. (For example, redefining capacity as 110% or averaging overcrowded schools with other schools to appear to reduce overcrowding in the one school. This issue has been followed for two years. For other issues followed by the team, see "Transparency Report".

Our thanks to team members Lila West, Dave Harding, Helenmary Ball, Norma Imershein, Anne Mychalus and Karen Horton

## **Board of Education Observer Team**

*Submitted by Pat Pease*

The change created a few years ago of having one board meeting per month in the evening has slowly evolved into the opportunity for parents and community members to observe and comment on issues of relevance to them and their children. Recently a group of over 50 parents and community members came to address the issues of general lack of response or slowness to resolve issues regarding disciplinary action for lack of civility and racial or ethnic slurs experienced in the school setting. Their voices were heard!

To further open doors of opportunity and communication in the coming year, J.C. Hooker, who serves on the school system's Citizen Advisory Council, and I will be sharing issues periodically to develop a broader perspective for assessment of the board and the school system and comment on issues of relevance to them and their children.

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## *Planning Commission Observer Team*

*Submitted by Judy Hooker, Planning Commission Observer Team Leader*

The Planning Commission had a total of 11 Regular Meetings, two Joint Public Hearings with the Board of County Commissioners and 4 Special Meetings from March 2018 to March 2019. The Commission has been busy with many tasks which included proposed text amendments, updating the Calvert County Transportation Plan and reviewing the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan May 2018 Draft. Maryland Annotated Code Title 3-201 of the Land Use Article directs that a Planning Commission shall prepare a plan to guide the development of public and private property in appropriate relationships. The first draft was reviewed by the Planning Commission October 25, 2017. At the Planning Commission work session, the commission directed several topics be added to the second draft plan.

The second plan was drafted by staff with consideration from other agencies and public comments. Public comments asked for clarifications of content or identified apparent conflicts within the documents or data. Public information was to be considered in updating the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission wanted to add a chapter on Heritage. The proposed expansion of Huntingtown and Prince Frederick Town Centers and Proposed Village Land Use Category were also examined. Middle, and south areas of the county before a public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan

The Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, May 2018 Draft was reviewed at the work session on May 30, 2018. The staff held open houses in the north, middle and south areas of the county prior to a public hearing on the draft Comprehensive Plan was held. (The updated plan was posted on the web page with announcement of the dates and locations of the Open Houses.)

The Planning Commission voted to review the draft plan at the work session. The July 18, 2018 meeting reviewed Chapter 1. Chapter 1 sets forth the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan as the official policy document for Calvert County. The Chapter describes the history of the county's values of preserving the rural landscape, beginning over 50 years ago with the first Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1967. The 1983 Comprehensive Plan introduced the Town Center concept. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan added sustainability goals. The draft plan continues to define sustainability as a unifying theme. The chapter discusses Priority Preservation Areas and Priority Funding Areas and includes the plan's mission and the county's 10 visions. The Commission reviewed the draft from June to November 2018.

The public hearing was scheduled for February 28, 2019. The purpose of the public hearing was to receive comments from the public and the agencies on the proposed approval of the Comprehensive Plan. Our Co-President, Sharron Bickel, spoke on behalf of the League of Women Voters at the hearing. The League is concerned about a lack of transparency in the Comprehensive Plan. She gave examples where important policy changes are not apparent without close examination and comparison with the old plan.

The Planning Commission approved the 2018 Draft Comprehensive Plan. The plan will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for consideration and adopted to replace the current Comprehensive Plan. The current Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2005 and amended in 2010 and 2017.

The operation of the Planning Commission is by and large transparent; proper notice of hearings, time for public comment and public discussion are usual practice. Minutes, agenda and video are available

online at the Planning Commission website. However, the majority of comments from the February public hearing do not seem to be referenced in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Publicity Committee Activities for 2018-2019**

*Submitted by Liz Demulling*

The League of Women Voters has maintained a robust Facebook presence over the last year. We have successfully promoted our events and generated engagement both in social content and traffic to the website. There was a discussion regarding establishing a Twitter and/or Instagram presence, but it was ultimately decided that a move onto these platforms was not right for us at this time as no one on the publicity committee had enough time or knowledge to dedicate to the start-up and maintenance of the goal.

Several events throughout the year helped to garner support and engagement in the League of Women Voters of Calvert County, including candidate forums, voter registration training, Legislative Evening and at least one Membership Interest Meeting designed to inform potential members of the benefits of joining the LWV. Each of these were advertised in local papers and promoted on social media. In addition, most of the press releases issued by the LWV of Calvert were published by The Calvert Recorder, and some of the smaller publications. The League of Women Voters of Calvert also had several members who wrote letters to the Editor about League events, activities and values throughout the year, many of which were published and were well received. We hope to continue this tradition and would happily entertain submissions from members for review towards this goal.

Many members have helped with the publicity, managing the website and Facebook, designing fliers, etc. We would like to thank the team members for their efforts: Krista Boughey, Miriam Gholl, Pat Hofmann and Liz Demulling.

## **LWV Studies: Purpose, Process and Opportunity**

*Submitted by Sandra Raviv*

A foundational underpinning of the League since its inception in 1920 is the participation of *informed* citizens in their political process. Hence, since its creation in 1957, the League Education Fund has served as a citizen education and research organization providing a process for thorough and balanced examination of important issues. The Fund's archived studies are available to some 800 national, state, and local Leagues in addition to the public.

From the LWV Education Fund Clearinghouse for studies web page  
(<https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/home>):

“Year in and year out, the men and women of the League are committed to providing fact-based information and open discussion forums to help voters make their own decisions....Our goals have always been to widen democratic participation; insist on both governmental and campaign funding transparency; and encourage full researched, fact-based decision-making in both foreign and domestic policies.”

“The League of Women Voters takes action on an issue only when we have a position addressing it. If the members have not studied and come to consensus on it, the League has no position and therefore cannot take action. Studies (whether national, state, or local) are a defined process lasting one to three

years, during which we undertake through pursuit of facts and details, both positive and negative, and come to consensus about policy.”

Study committee members draft consensus questions, utilizing articles, books, videos, data, interviews, and other resources to examine an issue. The information is brought to the membership for consensus on the questions, and then to the Board for recommended positions based on the membership consensus. The study committee reviews the Board recommendations, and forms a consensus statement which becomes the recommended League position. This proposed position then goes back to the members who vote to approve, amend, or reject it.

Study committees are chaired by one or two Board members, who help to enlist members who will be as neutral or balanced as possible, representing all sides of the study issue. Specific roles for each member are determined based upon their experience with the issue.

The Calvert League has authored many studies in its 50- plus years history: on transportation, housing, the needs of children, transparency in government, the county’s environmental practices, etc. The studies directly or indirectly led to the formation of the Collaborative for Children, the swimming pool, the Harriet Elizabeth Brown Community Center, the Housing Authority, the Green Expo, etc. Let’s keep the possibility of initiating a study in mind as we identify civic problems.

## **Sustainable Calvert Network and the Calvert County LWV**

*Submitted by Pat Hofmann, LWV Representative to Sustainable Calvert*

Sustainable Calvert Network is a coalition of Calvert County organizations with the following mission:

*To share information and offer support and cooperation among Network members;  
to achieve a future for Calvert County that fully integrates farming, fishing, natural  
and cultural resources, along with economic and societal needs.*

The League is a member of this coalition.

This network of organizations has been meeting to discuss the update to the County’s comprehensive plan and land preservation. The group sponsored a Rural Lands Forum on March 28, 2018, to inform the community about the economic benefits of rural land.

The Sustainable Calvert Network has several recommendations for the County’s long range plan revision. Some of the recommendations are:

- Retain the goal of preserving 40,000 acres of land (currently 29,000 acres are preserved);
- Use \$1.5 million from the recordation tax for land preservation;
- Add \$1 million annually from the general fund for land preservation; and
- Pay \$4,700 per acre for county purchased development rights with a 3% annual increase.

Rural lands create jobs, provide food and recreation, and protect fisheries. Along with heritage tourism such as museums and cultural events, they generate millions of dollars for the County’s economy.

# Transparency in Government Report for 2018-2019

*Submitted by Sharron Bickel*

This year, the primary issues were identified by the Transparency Team leader, John Perryman, who was active from June, 2018 through December, 2018. The issues the team followed until John's departure were the following:

**Annual Public Budget Town Hall cancelled.** As a result of the 2014 League study, "Transparency in Governance in Calvert County", the Calvert County department of Budget and Finance began holding a public meeting in August or September when the county is developing the budget for the next fiscal year to give citizens a chance to state to officials how they would like the county budget to be spent. (Otherwise, the first public input is at the end of the fiscal year, after the budget process is nearly completed.)

In departure from the practice of the years 2015, 2016 and 2017, no public meeting was held. The first public input to the annual budget was in March, after the budget had been largely developed.

**Not Using County Online Calendar for Public Hearings and Meetings.** John contacted the county about its failure to use the county's public online calendar for public hearings and meetings. The posting and coordination of calendars is inconsistent and confusing.

## **Lack of transparency on Purchasing a Prince Frederick Transportation Hub.**

John contacted and met with the County Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Community Resource Director and General Services Director about concerns with the lack of transparency while planning to purchase a transportation hub in Prince Frederick. John requested to be directed to a complete project file which the team might review at the project manager's office which might explain why the county is purchasing property instead of using part of Armory Square (already county property) as a transportation hub. After many email exchanges, the County Administrator responded, listing reasons why other possible locations could not be used, and the fact that the State will likely give a grant for the purchase of land, which leaves more of Armory Square available for commercial development.

**Too many Post- Approval Budget Adjustments.** One other area we've vetted is what seemed to be a lot of budget adjustments immediately after the budget was approved. The support material for the budget adjustments existed long before the budget was approved. Our concern is the draft budget presented to the public in May was unnecessarily incomplete, and therefore, not transparent.

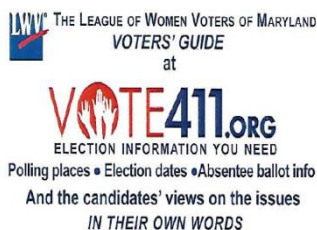
**County activity to reduce the adequate facilities ordinance with regard to the schools.** The team has followed the proposals to change the adequate public facilities amendment for at least 2 years. The proposed change in the adequate public facilities regulations would allow our schools to be overcrowded by 10% or 110% of the Maryland standard for adequate capacity. If this change in standard were adopted it would facilitate more building in the north of the county. At a Planning Commission John testified that our inquiry showed that the Calvert County School system when asked raised no objection, but did not (as was presented by the BOCC) recommend the change. Another person also testified that the change would invite a creeping tendency to overcrowding in classrooms. The Planning Commission did not accept this change at that time.

**Voter Services Report for 2018-2019**  
*Submitted by Gladys White, Voter Services Chair*

Voting and Voter Services are in the DNA of the League of Women Voters.

### ***Registering Voters***

League member, Janet Ashby, did an excellent job managing the Vote411.org website and our Voters' Guide. She compiled the data collected from candidates for both the local and state offices. The website and guide were available before the primary election in June, 2018 and was updated by September for the general election held in November.



Approximately 150,000 citizens statewide and 2200 in Calvert County viewed the website state-wide to learn about the candidates. The Calvert County League printed more than fifty copies of the guides. These guides along with the Vote411.org cards were distributed to libraries, senior centers, schools and homeless shelters throughout the county. Also, we had literature about the voting process sent to each library for display. We would like to thank Ralph Watkins with the State chapter League for his assistance.

### **Registering Voters and the National Voter Registration Day at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM)**

The committee wanted to educate the public about the importance of the right to vote. In order to register voters, the members had to be trained on the process. Paula Bailey, Election Registrar from the Calvert County Board of Elections, provided a workshop for approximately twenty members and community outreach partners on September 17, 2018. The 30-minute training took place at the Harriet Brown Center.

On National Voter Registration Day (September 25th) and October 3rd, 2018, a cadre of volunteers from the League of Women Voters of Calvert County registered voters, along with members of the following organizations: Concerned Black Women of Calvert County; Let People Vote of Southern Maryland; Omega Pi Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; and Tri-County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

This initiative took place at the College of Southern Maryland in Prince Frederick, Maryland. Approximately 50 young people were registered at these events. Fliers and Vote411.org cards as well as information about early voting and the general election were distributed.

We were extremely thankful for the support received from the college and their staff. The CSM student population is important to our mission. We are currently arranging for this event for 2019.

LWV member, Janet Bellizzi, led two voter registrations at the Solomons River Walk on June 30 and July 28, 2018 on behalf of Let People Vote Southern Maryland. She was assisted by several members of the League.

On August 7 at National Night Out, members of the Voter Services Committee and other League volunteers passed out Vote411.org cards, information about early voting and the general election,



Candidate Forums, Legislative Evening, and National Voter Registration events at College of Southern Maryland.

LWV member Chris Banks and members of the NAACP registered residents in the Yardley Hills Community in October.

Voter Services Committee members also partnered with Let People Vote Southern Maryland from October 8-11 at the Calvert County high schools where over 50 students registered to vote. This is an opportunity we hope to continue in the future.

### **Outreach to Absentee Voters and Ex-Felons**

The League mailed almost 500 postcards to Calvert County citizens living across Maryland who were unable to vote in their local election to inform them about Vote411.org. The State League sent information about Vote411.org to Marylanders living temporarily in other states and countries. We obtained the list of absentee voters from the Board of Elections of Calvert County.

Gail Hatfield, Elections Administrator for Calvert County, informed League members that the term “Absentee Ballot” will be renamed to “Mail In Ballot” in the near future.

J.C. Hooker, a League member, distributed information to ex-felons about their right to vote. She also provided them with Vote411.org cards so they could learn about the candidates running for office.

### **Candidate Forums**

The League sponsored three candidate forums for the residents of the county. The forums were advertised via the following methodologies: the local newspaper, press releases, community calendars, community bulletin boards, the League’s website, and fliers that were distributed at League events. The venue for two of the forums was the Family Life Center at St. John Vianney’s Church. Mrs. Joann Scanlan, manager of the Center, was extremely helpful to the League, which made these events run smoothly. The final forum was held at the Town Hall in North Beach. We are grateful to Stacey Wilkerson, Town Clerk, for her assistance in this event.

We received support from eight outreach partners: Calvert Collaborative for Children and Youth; Concerned Black Women of Calvert County; Kiwanis Club of Waldorf, Calvert Satellite; Let People Vote Southern Maryland; NAACP of Calvert County; Omega Pi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Sustainable Calvert Network; and the Tri-County (MD) Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Each group had to abide by the LWV rules. Their members were present at each forum and assisted the League in our endeavors. We are grateful for the participation and representation of these partners in the forums.

The first forum was held on October 4, 2018 for candidates pursuing County positions. This included Commissioners, Sheriff, Register of Wills, and Orphan’s Court. Approximately 200 people attended. The audience submitted wonderful questions, which allowed the candidates to share their stances and viewpoints on a variety of topics. The evening went by very quickly. For some in the community this was their first opportunity to meet the candidates and hear their reasons for running for these positions. All the candidates who accepted our invitation were in attendance. Malcolm Funn and Chris Banks were moderators for the event.

The second forum for the State representatives and the State referendums was held on October 11, 2018. Mr. Ralph Watkins from the LWVMD explained and discussed the referendums in laymen's terms for the audience. All of the State representatives that accepted our invitation were present for the forum. There were a large number of people in attendance for this event. Dixie Miller moderated this forum.

The third forum was for the mayoral race in North Beach. Mr. Hummel and Mr. Benton were the two candidates for this position. There were approximately 75 people in attendance. Extra seating had to be provided for the large audience. The audience was very engaged in the responses to the questions by the candidates. Dixie Miller and Inez Claggett were the moderators for this forum.

All three forums were well-organized and ran efficiently because of our moderators, timekeepers (Renita Alexander, Helenmary Ball, Liz Demulling, and Maureen Hoffman), the question screeners (Carol Booker, John Perryman, Sandy Raviv, and Sherrey Williams). The coordinator of the greeters and ushers was Ashley Anderson. The younger people were from the local high schools, and they did a wonderful job.

A very important part of the forums was to make sure the candidates and the audience were aware of the LWV rules and willing to follow them throughout the events. The rules were printed on the programs and recited orally by the moderators at the beginning of each forum. It was important that the venues selected for the forums were also willing to accept our rules.

### **Voter Bill of Rights and Meeting with Calvert County Election Board**

As a result of feedback received from various League members and others related to the 2018 mid-term elections, the committee undertook the creation of a Maryland Voter Bill of Rights and agreed to meet with the Calvert County Election Board.

On March 5, 2019, Sharron Bickel and I met with Gail Hatfield to discuss concerns and recommendations resulting from the mid-term election experiences. Gail answered all of the questions posed and reviewed the draft Voter Bill of Rights. She agreed to distribute the document to individuals who register to vote at the Election Board and who visit the office with questions. The Voter Bill of Rights is a work-in-progress and will be updated in accordance with legislation passed during the Maryland 2019 and 2020 legislative sessions.

## **WOW – Women of the World Annual Awards Luncheon**

*Submitted by Sandra Raviv, WOW Co-Chair*

### **2019 Women of the World Celebration**

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Women of the World Celebration was held on March 17th at the Rod and Reel restaurant in Chesapeake Beach with 165 attendees and eight partner organizations participating. Co-chaired by our own Grace Mary Brady and Joan Winship of the Calvert County Commission for Women, the affair was well received for its tasty menu, pleasing music provided by Huntingtown High School musicians, and the timely remarks of Ambassador Susan G. Esserman, former US Trade Representative and Founder of the UMD SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors who spoke about the challenges facing women, particularly the crime of trafficking and its prevalence in the country.

Assisting the Planning Committee for the League was Helenmary Ball, LWVCC Treasurer who handled a smooth registration process as well as all financial transactions for WOW. This year the carry-over funds after expenses amounted to some \$1800 which will be used for next year's celebration. Sandra Raviv brought her experience from the prior year to the Planning Committee as the LWVCC representative.

This year the League honored our Voter Advocacy team for exceptional contributions leading up to the 2018 general election:

- Gladys White, for her inspired leadership of a very full Voter Service program that required coordination and management of multiple events and volunteers across the county
- Ashley Anderson, for her activism in voter registration and the initiation of a League chapter for students at Huntingtown High School
- Janet Ashby, for her prodigious effort in producing the online Vote411.org, viewed by over 10,000 members of the public
- Janet Belizzi for her work on printed Voter Guides that were distributed throughout Calvert County
- Judy Hooker, for her work on a variety of registration and candidate forum events
- Sharron Bickel for early contributions that energized and revitalized the League's voter service program
- Carol Booker, for her contributions to voter registration and candidate forums
- Cassandra Okwumabua, for outstanding leadership in organizing four successive Legislative Evenings that gave citizens the opportunity to become acquainted with their newly elected state officials

This year's WOW celebration benefitted from a larger venue that provided on-site catering and no restrictions on the number of attendees. All who came to enjoy and/or participate agreed that it was an exceptionally well-run and inspiring affair.