

**League of  
Women Voters**  
OF KENT COUNTY

The Kent County Voter

P.O. Box 374  
Chestertown, MD 21620  
410-810-1883

[www.kent.lwvmd.org](http://www.kent.lwvmd.org) Summer 2017

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## Message from the Co-Presidents

Dear Kent County Leaguers,

Our hosting of the state convention is behind us! All parts of the weekend went very well, thanks to the incredible contributions of time, energy, ideas, artistry, and “gifts” from Kent County members and friends. By our count **29 of our 54 LWVKC members** stepped up to become involved in this effort, an amazing show of support! Thank you all, most profoundly.

Delegates at this convention voted to undertake four new statewide studies, each of which will last one to two years: **Death with Dignity**, chaired by our own Sandra Bjork; **Civic Education for Students and the Public in General**; **Corrections and Bail**; and **Services for Maryland’s Aging Population**. If you are interested in any of these topics, here’s your chance to be a part of a statewide group that will examine these issues with a view to developing fact sheets and consensus questions, perhaps resulting in the adoption of specific Maryland LWV public policy positions. Most study committee meetings are held by teleconference. If you are interested in learning more about the Death with Dignity study please contact Sandy at [sbjork@atlanticbb.net](mailto:sbjork@atlanticbb.net). If you are interested in any of the others contact one of us (email addresses below).

Our Kent County board held its annual retreat this past week, and laid out some rough goals for the months ahead. We have re-thought our methods of communication with you, and so, henceforth our LWVKC *Voter*, edited by George Shivers, [gshivers2@washcoll.edu](mailto:gshivers2@washcoll.edu), will be sent to you four times a year. Within these pages George hopes to continue exploring issues of interest to Leaguers in an in-depth way, as these pages attest. And, starting later in the summer, we will begin using email e-blasts to get the word out about upcoming events in a timely fashion. Barbara Flook, [bsflook@gmail.com](mailto:bsflook@gmail.com), will head up this project. Let us know if you would like to help in either of these communications, or if you’d like to be a part of our Social Media team. We need knowledge and skills about using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Is this something you are interested in? Let us know.

We plan to hold two or three “trending topics” events at a local restaurant or pub, with a speaker knowledgeable about a defined topic in a setting conducive to conversation and camaraderie. We are hoping to hold our first special evening in mid-October. Stay tuned! If you have questions or ideas about these meetings, contact our 1<sup>st</sup> VP Peggy Markman, [pegmarkman@gmail.com](mailto:pegmarkman@gmail.com).

This fall we plan to sponsor a forum or forums for candidates for Chestertown mayor and council if there are races for these offices, but our work on Voter Service won’t really commence until spring, when we will hold candidate forums in anticipation of the Primary Election next June. A busy season awaits us in 2018! Contact Nancy Smith, [nismith@verizon.com](mailto:nismith@verizon.com), if you’d like to help with forums or *Voters’ Guides*.

Our next board meeting will be held on August 8, 9:30 a.m., at the Yellow House at the Kent County Public Library. We cordially invite you to attend this meeting, or any of our board meetings, which are usually held on the second Tuesday at the month, same time and location.

We will be in touch as our plans firm up for our fall events. In the meantime, we hope you have a peaceful and restorative summer!

Best regards,

Lynn Dolinger, [lynn.thirdwish@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.thirdwish@gmail.com)

Jane Hardy, [janewhardy@gmail.com](mailto:janewhardy@gmail.com)

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## LWVKC Events Calendar

**Sunday, July 16, 3:00 -- 8:30 p.m., Gerrymander Meander 2** in Baltimore County  
(See article below.)

**Sunday, July 23, 1:45 p.m.,** LWVMD Fundraiser, a performance of “**Thurgood**” at the Olney Theatre, Olney, MD. See article page 11.

**Tuesday, August 8, 9:30 a.m., LWVKC Board meeting,** Yellow Bldg., Kent County Public Library, Chestertown.

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### Gerrymander Meander in Baltimore County

Join in a celebration of Eldridge Gerry’s birthday and at the same time protest gerrymandering in Maryland and the United States on Sunday, July 16! Gerrymander Meander 1 was a race around the irregular boundaries of Maryland Congressional District 3, a prime example of gerrymandering. This year celebrants will raise a glass to the man who gave his name to this unfortunate practice! Join us for Gerrymander Meander 2, also known as **What Were They Thinking DRINKING? Participants will take part in a tour of Baltimore County Restaurants to enjoy good food and drink and hear speakers on redistricting reform.** You may join this rally for a fair districting process at the location of your choice (one of four) or get on the van to visit more than one! To reserve a place in the Gerry Van to visit all four locations you need to make a reservation on Eventbrite and make a donation at [http://www.lwvmd.org/gerrymander\\_meander2](http://www.lwvmd.org/gerrymander_meander2) to help defray the costs of the event: \$30 for a single rider; 2 for \$50. You should register for each location you plan to attend. The four locations are:

- Le Bistro du Village (District 3) at 3 p.m.
- Tark’s Grill (District 2) at 4:30 p.m.
- Roma’s Café (District 1) at 6 p.m.
- Green Turtle Bar & Grille (District 7) at 7:30 p.m.

One county (Baltimore County) – four events. Cross Congressional district lines 5 times!

See the flyer on page 12 to learn more!

## **LWVMD Holds Biennial Convention in Chestertown**

The LWVMD Convention was held at Washington College in Chestertown this year from June 9 through June 11. The Convention was dedicated to planning the state League's work for the next two years by adopting a new program of action and study. New officers and directors were elected as well. There were workshops and lunchtime discussions focusing on such topics as:

- Taking advantage of increased interest in joining the League
- Using the NationBuilder Platform for communication and Web-site creation
- Guidance for treasurers
- \*A briefing on the LWVMD Primary Election Study, Part II

Sheila Bair, President of Washington College, was the keynote speaker at the banquet on Saturday night.

Our League arranged for several events on Friday afternoon and evening for visitors. These included a walking tour of Historic Chestertown ending with afternoon tea at the White Swan Tavern, a waterside picnic in the evening at the home of member Bobby Sutton, or alternatively a dinner excursion on the Chester River Packet. Attendees also had the option of attending a National Music Festival concert on Friday evening



**Convention attendees relax at the waterside picnic**



**Convention Visitors set out on tour of Historic Chestertown**



**County Commissioner welcomes convention attendees to Kent County**



**Convention attendees at work**

**The Officers and Board of the League of Women Voters of Kent County would like to thank all the many members who volunteered and whose efforts made the State Convention a great success!**

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### **2017 Corr Award Winner**

Each year our League awards a graduating senior of Kent County High School a monetary scholarship. Students fill out an application emphasizing community service and good citizenship and are interviewed by a panel of local League board members. This year there were eight very strong applicants. They were interviewed by Linda Reed, Betty Barbe and George Shivers. The awardee for 2017 is **Morgan Blazejak**, who was given the award by Linda Reed at the school's Award Night ceremony in late May.

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### **Billboard with Movable Letters for Sale**

Our League would like to sell the large billboard, five feet by eight feet, with moveable five-inch letters. that we have owned for several years. The offering price is \$200. If you are interested in purchasing it or know of a person or organization that might be interested, please contact Jane Hardy, [janehardy@gmail.com](mailto:janehardy@gmail.com).

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### **President of LWWUS Calls for Action on Health Care**

The healthcare legislation recently passed by the House of Representatives would undo all the progress made under the Affordable Care Act. Chris Carson, president of the LWWUS, just sent out the following email, calling for League members to take action to prevent this reversal:

In the U.S. Senate, a small group of Senators are secretly working to make decisions that will cut coverage, raise rates and give the richest Americans tax breaks at the expense of everyone else.

**Senate leadership is ignoring the needs of the American people. [Now is the time to make your voice heard by calling or emailing your Senators today!](#)**

Legislation passed by the U.S. House to repeal and replace the ACA fails to reflect the American values of fairness, community and concern for all. It will cut coverage for 14million Americans in the next year, raise premiums by 20% and give nearly \$700 billion to the wealthy and big corporations. The Senate is trying to force us down the same disastrous path, pushing to gut coverage for people with pre-existing conditions while doing long-term damage to Medicaid.

The Affordable Care Act is not perfect, but the path that congressional leadership has us on is bad for the well-being of millions of Americans. [Tell your Senators that Americans deserve better.](#)

**Any bill that moves forward must do the following:**

- Guarantee that pre-existing conditions can't be used to deny coverage or raise rates
- Ensure health insurance rates and access do not discriminate against women
- Provide coverage of preventive care, limit out of pocket costs and prohibit lifetime insurance caps
- Ensure that Medicaid recipients can continue to receive full health care service.
- **It's your turn to make your voice heard.** [Call or email your Senators today and let them know where you stand.](#) We need a plan that reflects the American values of fairness, community, and concern for all.

Sincerely

Chris Carson  
President, LWVUS

P.S. Want to call your Senators directly? [Call the Capitol switchboard at \(202\) 224-3121.](#)

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## **LWVKC Holds Annual Meeting on April 27**



Pam Ortiz was the featured speaker at the annual luncheon and meeting held in the Emmanuel Episcopal Church Parish Hall on April 27. Her topic was "Access to Justice in a Digital Democracy." An important theme of her talk was that "a healthy civil society is a conversation," and she noted the similarity between the words "conversation" and "conversion," saying that in a real conversation someone, and usually both parties, experience a change. Another important theme was that you know you have a healthy civil

society when social reform movements are present and when citizens are consulted "with regard to government policy, personnel and resources. This requires greater citizen participation, the equalization of resources, the ability to participate regardless of social inequality and increasing trust between the people and their institutions. A third theme was that access to justice is one tool of a civil society that is available to everyone on an equal basis. Citizens need to understand the law and know their rights and there must be an independent judiciary available to enforce those rights. Therefore there needs to be "robust funding for civil legal aid." According to Ortiz the decline of the middle class is a major problem of our time as regards the issue of equal justice. Finally, Ortiz spoke of some of the issues of justice in our digital age.

1. People expect to find and use free digital legal contacts, thus changing the way law is practiced.
2. People expect to do a lot themselves and hire lawyers only when needed.
3. The types of jobs lawyers will have in the future will change.
4. Digital resources are not free, but how do we pay for them?
5. Walmart and other retail giants get into the business of legal services.

Ortiz stated that to make sure that current changes promote rather than diminish our democracy "we must ensure the impact of the new digital economy results in greater public resources" and "re-establish the tension and balance built into our social, political and economic worlds by ensuring that ALL have a place at the table." She then discussed the means by which these goals can be achieved.

Following lunch and Pam Ortiz's talk, the business meeting proceeded. Our state liaison JoAnn Ross brought greetings and praise for our League's accomplishments during the year.



President Sandra Bjork recognized the seven past presidents who were at the meeting: Eva Bauman, Elaine Naper, Rebecca Goode, Jane Hardy, Frances Miller, Jeanette Sherbondy and Nancy Smith. The minutes of last year's meeting were approved, the budget for the new year was passed and the new officers proposed by the Nominations Committee were elected. These were as follows:

Co-presidents: Lynn Dolinger and Jane Hardy  
1st Vice-President: Peggy Markman  
Chair of Nominating Committee: JoAnn Kowalski

Off-Board Members of Nominating Committee: Nancy Holland  
Dianne Turpin  
Elected Directors: Frances Miller and Sandra Bjork  
Elected Director for one-year ending in 2018: Nancy Smith

The members present were made aware of a by-laws change made at the most recent national convention, as it applies to the Kent County League. The qualification for membership now reads "Voting members shall be persons (formerly "citizens") 16 years of age (formerly 18) who are current in their dues to the League of Women Voters of Kent County.



**Paying tribute to former president Sandra Bjork and welcoming the new co-president, Jane Hardy**

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**LWWUS Issues Statement on the Paris Climate Agreement**

“Withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement is a giant step in the wrong direction for the health of the planet and all living beings. President Trump’s decision today will undermine global cooperation and have a harmful impact on U.S. relations with our most trusted world allies. The long-term effects of this decision will make more people sick, especially children and the elderly. The League of Women Voters is gravely disappointed to see the United States on the wrong side of history in the fight to protect our planet.”

Eleven governors and 187 mayors have denounced the President's decision and promised to uphold the Paris Agreement. We urge you to phone Governor Hogan at 410-974-3901 and urge him to join the other governors who have pledged to maintain the terms of the Paris Agreement in their states. The 11 governors are Jerry Brown (California), Kate Brown (Oregon), Andrew Cuomo (New York), John Hickenlooper (Colorado), David Y. Ige (Hawaii), Jay Inslee (Washington), Dannel P. Malloy (Connecticut), Gina M. Raimondo (Rhode Island) and Phil Scott (Vermont).

A recent newsletter of Indivisible, a non-partisan political action group, included the following information as it applies to the impact of climate change on the Eastern Shore.

- 13 islands have already disappeared in the Chesapeake Bay

- Thousands of acres of land, worth millions of dollars (farming, commercial, residential), are also at risk of loss due to sea level rise
- Warming waters and decreasing oxygen levels are a danger to animal and plant life in the Bay
- Tens of thousands of jobs, and billions of dollars, in the commercial seafood industry in the region, could be at risk if sea warming continues

Our Governor has said that he is committed to preserving the environment of our State. We need to convince him to make a stronger statement publicly denouncing the President's withdrawal of the U.S. from the Paris Agreement.

## “Thurgood”

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND  
AT THE OLNEY THEATRE ON JULY 23

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 afternoon 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.  
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](http://www.lwvmd.org/thurgood)

JOIN US TO RALLY FOR A FAIR DISTRICTING  
PROCESS WITH A RESTAURANT TOUR!

# Gerrymander Meander 2

What were they ~~thinking~~

DRINKING?



@tamegerrymander

Sunday, July 16<sup>th</sup> | 3:00-8:30pm | Baltimore County

## Participating Locations!

Le Bistro du Village | 3-4pm

*Baltimore MD*

Tark's Grill | 4:30-5:30pm

*Lutherville-Timonium MD*

Roma's Cafe | 6-7pm

*Cockeysville MD*

The Greene Turtle | 7:30-8:30pm

*Hunt Valley MD*

13 Miles – 1 County – Four  
Events – 5 Districts!

Drink & food specials,  
contests, guest speakers!

To register, visit [GerrymanderMeander2.eventbrite.com](https://www.gerrymandermeander2.eventbrite.com)

To donate or reserve a seat on the van (\$30 for 1, \$50 for 2), visit [www.lwvmd.org/gerrymander\\_meander\\_2](http://www.lwvmd.org/gerrymander_meander_2)  
Questions, call the League of Women Voters at 410-269-0232