December: Liquor control topic burns for League units too

Liquor control in Montgomery County has become a burning topic. As far as we know, there will be at least three alcohol bills in the upcoming General Assembly hopper in January.

Our study committee has been working hard to gather the information that will lead to lively discussions about the merits and demerits of deregulated liquor.

For example, how far should deregulation go? What are the consequences if County liquor control is abolished? When 400 employees lose their jobs? What happens to the $30 million annual profit currently paying down nearly $135 million in revenue bonds?

Come and bring a guest for a lively discussion at one of the December units – Dec. 8, 9, 10 and 14. (See p 4.)—Barbara Hankins, Liquor Control Study committee

January: Program Planning replaces unit meeting

None of LWVMC’s future depends on a crystal ball. Every January it depends on our members putting their heads together, discussing the pros and cons, and then creating the year’s agenda.

For member convenience, we set two Program Planning sessions, both at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, Monday evening, Jan. 11, from 6-8:30 and Tuesday, Jan. 12, from 10 am to 12:30 pm. Come to either or both sessions and cast your (one) vote to determine our units of study and our Trending Topics public programs for the year. In addition help review our current positions that you can find in the Member Handbook.

If you already have developed some suggestions, please submit them to our LWVMC office by Friday, Dec. 18, so they can be incorporated into the Monday, Jan. 4, mailing of our meeting agenda. New suggestions are always welcome at the meetings themselves.

In case of inclement weather, the evening program will be Tuesday, Jan. 19, and the daytime program, Wednesday, Jan. 20.
For it is in giving that we receive.  
—Francis of Assisi

As you know, I write this letter in November before Thanksgiving. If you already have checked the dateline on page 1 or the boxed article there, you will have noticed that this Voter is a double-month issue for both December and January, ironically so, a month when we give and a month when we give thanks that we are finished giving.

Now is the time in many places of worship that stewardship efforts peak: one oft-sounded, alliterative theme is “Giving of Time, Talent and Treasure.” In our busy secular lives, time is perhaps the most valuable among these. In December each of us will have the chance to join a unit meeting and hear about our study of Montgomery County alcohol sales, a session that will likely lead to a decision about the League’s position, since the state and county governments are both pondering legislation on the subject.

Our next Trending Topic at the end of January is under consideration. Watch for a notice in January.

Giving of one’s talent to the League is also something that is important. Linda Silversmith, who chairs the Natural Resources Committee, recalls that when she first arrived in the county, more than 20 active people served on it. Now just 4-5 members do so. If environmental issues intrigue you, this is the perfect committee for you to join. In addition you can read an appeal from a new committee in this issue. Health and Human Services is seeking members and ideas for its “umbrella” concept.

Program Planning punctuates January. If there is an issue that is near and dear to you, come and advocate for it. Perhaps you can lend your talent to organize a study about it too.

Of course, no musing on giving would be complete that omitted money. Money is what keeps our League office open, the Montgomery Voter on its way, and the Voters’ Guide guiding. Please give generously when you receive your LWVMC end-of-year fundraising letter. The contributions you make are vital. They let us all pursue noble work.

Remember, although you should look for a mailing about Program Planning in the first full week of January, your next Voter will splash down in February. —Linna

THANK YOU

We appreciate the thoughtful donations we have received recently. In memory of League members Mary Alice Beard and Maxine Montgomery. Thank you for remembering these dedicated League members by supporting LWVMC.
DECEMBER 2015 - JANUARY 2016 EVENTS CALENDAR
12216 Parklawn Dr, Ste 105, Rockville, MD 20852-1710
All meetings are open to the public. LWVMC Office & Montgomery County libraries are handicap-accessible.

KEY: M = Monday, Tu = Tuesday, W = Wednesday, Th = Thursday, F = Friday, Sa = Saturday, Su = Sunday
a = am, n = noon, p = pm or midnight  I = Insert, S = Story, C = Contact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE &amp; TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, W 9:45a</td>
<td>LWVMC Board Meeting</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2, W 12:30p</td>
<td>Unit Council</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, F 2p</td>
<td>Dry Run: Liquor Control Study</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-10, 14, Tu-Th, M</td>
<td>Units: Liquor Control</td>
<td>p4 &amp; S p1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16, W 7a</td>
<td>Committee for Montgomery Breakfast</td>
<td>Bethesda North Conference Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-31, Th-Th</td>
<td>Christmas/Winter Break</td>
<td>LWVMC, MD Offices closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANUARY 2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1, F</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>LWVMC, MD Offices closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6, W 9:45a</td>
<td>LWVMC Board Meeting</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9, Sa 10a</td>
<td>LWVMD VOTE411 Workshop</td>
<td>Wilde Lake Interfaith Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11, M 6p</td>
<td>Program Planning, Evening</td>
<td>Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12, Tu 10a</td>
<td>Program Planning, Day</td>
<td>Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13, W</td>
<td>MD General Assembly convenes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18, M</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19, Tu 6p</td>
<td>Snow Date for Program Planning, Evening</td>
<td>LWVMC, MD Offices closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20, W 10a</td>
<td>Snow Date for Program Planning, Day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23, Sa 10a</td>
<td>LWVMD Winter Workshop, Topics: TBA</td>
<td>Wilde Lake Interfaith Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25, M 12:15p</td>
<td>Trending Topics: Info to be provided in Jan.</td>
<td>Wheaton Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30, Sa</td>
<td>Snow Date for LWVMD Winter Workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31, Su 11:30a</td>
<td>Women’s Legislative Briefing</td>
<td>Universities at Shady Grove, see Insert</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Chairperson(s) listed on p2 for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE &amp; TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/4, F 11:30a</td>
<td>Agriculture / Managing Density</td>
<td>9608 Hawick Ln, Kensington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/16, W 10:30a</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/17, Th 7p</td>
<td>County Grants &amp; Contracts</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7, M 2:30p</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Dec. Meeting</td>
<td>Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td>C, Judy Whiton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11, F 10a</td>
<td>Land Use &amp; Transportation</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/7, M 7p</td>
<td>Making Democracy Work</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/21, M 10:30a</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/18, F 12n</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
<td>260 New Mark Esplanade, Rockville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COMING UP IN FEBRUARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE &amp; TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3, W 9:45a</td>
<td>LWVMC Board Meeting</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3, W 12:30p</td>
<td>Unit Council</td>
<td>LWVMC Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-11, M-Th</td>
<td>Units: Transportation – County Sustainability Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12, F 10a</td>
<td>Great Decisions Begins</td>
<td>Cedar Lane UU Church, Chalice House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14, Su</td>
<td>Anniversary of the Founding of League of Women Voters – Happy 96th!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15, M</td>
<td>Presidents Day</td>
<td>LWVMC, MD Offices closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trending Topics: Board of Education Candidates Event</td>
<td>Date, Time &amp; Location TBD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DECEMBER 2015 UNITS CALENDAR:
Consensus on Liquor Control in Montgomery County

Meetings held at the LWVMC office, Asbury, Riderwood & Rossmoor are handicap-accessible

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8
10 AM  TUESDAY AM
Asbury Methodist Village, 417 Russell Ave.  
Hefner Entrance, Gaithersburg  
Contact Holly Meyer, 301-726-1806

7:30 PM  TUESDAY PM
3208 Pickwick Lane, Chevy Chase  
Contact Carol Gross, 301-652-2236

WEDNESDAY, DEC 9
9:30 AM  BETHESDA/POTOMAC
9608 Hawick Lane, Kensington  
Contact Margaret Chasson, 301-942-0497

10:15 AM  ROSSMOOR
Leisure World Clubhouse 1  
3701 Rossmoor Blvd, Silver Spring  
Contact Elaine Apter, 301-438-8707

12:00 PM  WEDNESDAY NOON
846 New Mark Esplanade, Rockville  
Contact Connie Tonat, 301-279-7796

THURSDAY, DEC 10
9:30 AM  SILVER SPRING
500 Cosgrove Way, Silver Spring  
Contact Fran Berger, 301-680-0052

MONDAY, DEC 14
12:30 PM  RIDERWOOD
Village Square Classroom 1  
Riderwood, Silver Spring  
Contact Nancy Allison, 240-204-0928

2 PM  ROCKVILLE PM
LWVMC Office  
Contact Mary Lanigan, 240-687-0517

LWVMC NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
We look forward to working with you. You have a great opportunity to get in on Program Planning or an exciting unit discussion in December. We welcome your help and your friendship.

Bethesda
Shohreh Rahnama 20817

North Bethesda
Neter Wolfe 20852

Silver Spring
Carmela Cowgill 20905
Joy Lazaroff 20902  •  Ann Nuss 20904
Ruth Sachs 20904

Congratulations!

Two of our members were featured in the October LWVUS Blog Round-up.

You may know Vicky Strella nationally as the League convention promoter maven. The answer she gives about her best League opportunity may surprise you—it came from former times when the League sponsored Presidential debates.

Meet the League:
Vicky Harian Strella
By: Stephanie Drahan, 10/23/2015

“Managing the Presidential debates was a fascinating opportunity to combine my interest in political communications with my respect for the League’s historic role in elections nationwide.”

http://lwv.org/blog/meet-league-vicky-harian-strella

Our other member is new to us and LWV. Her quote is taken from a speech she gave at her inauguration reception as the new CEO of the LWV!

Continued p 5, Building…
Building on the League Legacy and Embracing the Future
By: Wylecia Wiggs Harris
10/09/2015

“I was drawn to join the League because of its noted impact on American history and politics coupled with my desire to continue to serve and support mission-focused organizations that work on issues about which I am passionate.”
http://lwv.org/blog/building-league-legacy-and-embracing-future

No better time than now to buy your calendars.
YES, 2016 is just around the corner, so don't get caught short. In addition, be sure to stock up for the upcoming holidays. The calendars make great gifts. Call the office to discuss.

LWVMD

Notes from State

Save the date for the LWVMD winter workshop.
Saturday, Jan. 23, at 10 am in Columbia.

VOTE411 training events are set for Jan. 9 in Columbia and for Jan. 16 on the Eastern Shore. Mark your calendars for these events. A webinar on the basics of VOTE411 (a good intro for new users and a useful refresher for us "old hands") is available at the LWVUS website. Just type “VOTE411 webinar” into the Search Box. —Ralph Watkins, LWVMD Voter Service Chair

The first issue of REPORT FROM STATE CIRCLE will be published in January with a Wrap-Up Issue in mid-April. The Report focuses on monitoring the Governor’s Budget, important legislative events, and a broad spectrum of social, economic, environmental and governmental proposals before the Maryland General Assembly. League reporters will cover these issues from the League perspective, including our long-considered positions and our priorities for this year.

The RSC is sent via email to all members and is mailed only to members who do not have email. If you haven't received your first copy by February, contact the LWVMC office to make sure your correct contact information is on file.
AGRICULTURE
What are we learning from corn, tomatoes and oranges about the safety of genetically-modified organisms?

Genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) have been controversial since the first commercial sale of genetically-modified foods in 1994, when Calgene marketed its Flavr Savr delayed-ripened tomato.

Critics have objected to GM crops on ecological, economic and health grounds. Pollen drift and increased use of pesticides have been the major ecological concerns, and controversy regarding patents has led to litigation, international trade disputes, protests and restrictive legislation in most countries.

At about the same time, Monsanto’s genetic modification of corn by introducing a gene from a bacterium set off a major fear campaign focused upon the unknown results of eating such food over a long period of time. Some 20 years later, the consensus among scientists who have made studies of GM foods is that food incorporating GM corn is safe to eat.

Nevertheless, fear-mongering continues.

While European countries were the most restrictive in controlling the production and marketing of genetically-engineered foods, it appears that GMOs are becoming more accepted in Europe. At this year’s international Expo Milano, the Netherlands’ exhibit included a display entitled Tomatoes in the Spotlight.

Its full text says, “Tomatoes need light to grow, but they will damage if they are left in the light more than 16 hours a day. [This is] hard on tomatoes cultivated in greenhouses, because their growth will come to a halt for 8 hours each day. Researchers from Wageningen University have now found a gene that will allow for cultivated tomatoes to stand light for 24 hours a day. This will increase tomato production by 20 percent.”

Note that the source of the gene is not specified and genetic modification is not specifically mentioned, but it appears that the Dutch are ready to say out loud that their researchers are manipulating genomes.

This spring our Environmental Protection Agency approved a large-scale field testing of citrus trees that have been genetically-engineered to resist citrus greening, a ruinous disease that has caused orange production to plummet.

Citrus greening (also called huanglongbing or HLB) has been damaging citrus trees around the world for many years, but was first found in the U.S. in 2005. The disease is caused by two related types of bacteria, both of which are spread from tree to tree by tiny insects called psyllia. The bacteria live deep within tree trunks and attack their vascular systems, making it difficult for the trees to transport nutrients from the soil to their leaves and fruit.

Infected trees produce fruit that is small, green and disgustingly bitter. They also tend to drop fruit before it reaches maturity. Within a few years of infection, the disease can make a once-flourishing tree completely barren.

No cure for the disease exists, but Florida citrus grower Southern Gardens has been developing genetically-modified trees for years now. It has modified the orange-tree genome to include a gene from spinach plants that produces a protein making citrus trees inhospitable to the bacteria that cause citrus greening.

The question remains: Are attitudes changing sufficiently that US and European consumers tomorrow will be ready to take swigs of GM orange juice?
— Margaret Chasson, Agriculture chair

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
New ‘umbrella’ committee

The group that studied the issues of Youth at Risk in 2014-2015 involved three different committees (two of which were experiencing dwindling membership), and two individuals interested in the topic. Our collaboration led us to consider another way of organizing.

We envision that HHS will bring together members of the Health Committee, Network For Children and, as needed, other committees, such as Education and Housing, to collaborate on studies related to public health and other human needs and resources in Montgomery County.

HHS would study issues such as child care, health care for children and adults, mental-health care, and services for special populations such as the elderly, the homeless, those with special needs and youth in the corrections system. Also included would be domestic-violence and substance-abuse victims.

This year our focus is on developing our agenda, selecting issues, and attending County Council Health and Human Services Committee hearings. We are looking at previous positions as well as considering where positions are lacking, precluding our ability to support improved or added services. In March 2016, we’ll examine the Executive’s proposed operating budget and draft testimony.

We hope new members will join us now as we define our path in health and human services, or later, after we select a specific area of study.—Chris Hager and Eva Feder, Co-chairs

Adrienne Craver Making Democracy Work® at the City of Rockville Candidates Debate
LWVUS WARNS OBAMA ADMINISTRATION OF NVRA LAWSUIT

For several years, LWV and our partners have been lobbying the states and the Obama Administration to make the health-care exchanges under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), which requires that eligible persons receive voter registration opportunities when applying for services. Persons applying for most health-care benefits including Medicaid, must do so on a health-care exchange created by their state government or facilitated by the federal government.

Those states that have created exchanges have recognized their obligation to bring their exchanges into compliance. To date, the Obama Administration has not.

The time has come to insist that the Administration follow the law. The NVRA permits a private right of action to force compliance. It may now need to be used to force the Administration to do the right thing.

On Oct. 28, the League and its partners, Demos and Project Vote, delivered a letter to the President, alerting the Administration to our intent to sue if necessary.

The ball is in the President’s court.

The NVRA is an important voter protection that the League worked hard to get. Voters deserve a chance to use it.

—Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS President

MORE NOTES FROM NATIONAL

First call to 52nd National Convention - June 16-19 in DC. Save the dates and keep up-to-date with the latest Convention news and innovations on our member website forum.lwv.org. Look for more information there starting next month on the schedule, registration, hotel and special events such as Lobby Day and a fun evening featuring the political comedy group, “Capitol Steps.”

Are you a Leaguer interested in the role of the League in the United Nations? If so, join the LWV UN Google Group. Contact administrator Chris Sagona at chrissagona@gmail.com.

The League has sent a letter to the U.S. Senate opposing any attempt to block implementation of the Clean Power Plan. Congress can review implementation of regulations developed by the Administration. Members of the LWVUS Lobby Corps will be visiting Senate offices to discuss this groundbreaking move that will save lives and protect the environment.

LWV submits written comments to the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Science Advisory Board (SAB). These are in regard to the SAB’s study of the effects of hydraulic fracturing on drinking-water sources.

Unit Choice: Greenbelt Visit

Depression-era community still rocks — Sally Roman, Diane Hibino
Sunday, January 31, 2016 from 11:30 AM to 7:00 PM
Doors Open at 11:30 am, Program 12:30–6 pm

The Montgomery County Commission for Women and our many co-sponsoring organizations invite you to the 2016 Women's Legislative Briefing. The purpose of the Briefing is to inform the residents of our state about legislative proposals before the Maryland General Assembly and the U.S. Congress that address issues of specific concern to women.

Again this year: special seminars will be offered for students in grades 8 - 12.

The conference will open with the keynote address and compelling seminars on upcoming state and federal legislation. A reception will conclude the event providing an opportunity to meet with county and state elected officials, advocates and representatives of the most prominent county, state and national women's organizations.

Place: The Universities at Shady Grove, Bldg II
9630 Gudelsky Drive, Rockville, Maryland

Regular Registration: $25.00 in advance $30.00 at the door

Register online: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2016-womens-legislative-briefing-tickets-17188623636

Contact us: Phone: (240) 777-8333
Email: cfwinfo@montgomerycountymd.gov
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw/WLB.html
LOOK FOR THESE INSERTS INSIDE YOUR VOTER

FACT SHEET: Liquor Control in Montgomery County

FLYER: Women’s Legislative Briefing, Sunday, Jan. 31

LWV MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Protecting the environment • Making government work
Adequate resources to meet the basic human needs of our citizens

Dec. 2015, Jan. 2016 Issue
2015/16 Nos. 4 & 5

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY ISSUE:
Thursday, Jan. 7
lwvmc@erols.com

Publisher of The Montgomery Voter: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD, INC. - CITIZEN EDUCATION FUND

Stay Connected to LWVMC!
President: Linna Barnes • Editors: Linda & Dave Anderson
12216 Parklawn Dr, Ste 105, Rockville, MD 20852 • Tel:(301) 984-9585
Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri:10 am - 3 pm & Tue:1 pm - 5 pm

Stay Connected Electronically!
facebook.com/mt.lwvmd.org • twitter.com/mocomdlwv
lwvmc@erols.com • lwvmocomd.org • Donate today online.

JOIN HERE! JOIN NOW!
HERE’S WHY

The women and men (yes, men) of the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County promote good government through non-partisan, grassroots volunteer work. We—

• Examine Issues
• Educate Citizens
• Register Voters
• Participate in Advocacy

Join today and receive valuable information from your free subscription to The Montgomery Voter. Membership also includes affiliation with the League of Women Voters of Maryland and the League of Women Voters of the United States.

NAME______________________________________________________
ADDRESS __________________________________________________
TEL (H) ______________________ EMAIL _________________________
CITY, STATE, ZIP_____________________________________________

ANNUAL DUES
Regular Membership $65.00
2nd member, same house $32.50
Student Membership $15.00
Optional Contribution
(Non-deductible) TOTAL ________

Please make your check payable to: LWVMC
Tel: (301) 984-9585 • Email: lwvmc@erols.com • Web: lwvmocomd.org