

State Board Letter

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LWVMD

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LWVMD Calendar

Nov	1-30	Native American Heritage Month
	10	Veterans Day
	16-17	National Student Vote Summit UMD College Park 8am-6:30pm and 9am-1:30pm
	17	LWVMD advocacy training on the How to Be an Advocate virtual, 3pm
	23	Thanksgiving
	28	Giving Tuesday
Dec	10	Human Rights Day
	11	Maryland Charity Campaign ends
Jan	1	New Year's Day
	5	LWVMD advocacy training on the How to Be an Advocate, part 2 virtual, 3pm
	10	MD General Assembly begins
	15	Marting Luther King, Jr., Day
	27	LWVMD Winter Workshop virtual, 9:30am - 12:30pm

On October 2, the 2023 [Maryland Charity Campaign](#) kicked off! This is the first year that LWVMD has been approved to participate. Current and retired State employees can donate to LWVMD through payroll deductions or retirement benefit deductions. Please click the [here](#) to donate to this campaign, and please encourage your family, friends, neighbors and others who are State employees to support our League!

MD Charity Campaign



The SBL is a monthly LWVMD publication that seeks to strengthen understanding and collaboration between the Board and local Leagues statewide

President's Message

PLEASE CONSIDER LWVMD IN YOUR YEAR-END GIVING

Like all non-profit organizations, LWVMD must appeal to members and other donors to raise funds to carry out our mission. Did you know that:

1. LWVMD tries to ensure that every voter in every part of the state has access to free, non-partisan election information. However even if we share it for free, that does not mean there is no cost. If LWVMD did not buy the Vote411.org platform, local Leagues would have two choices: spend several thousand dollars to buy it on their own or turn their back on the voters in their communities.
2. Every election, voters call LWVMD directly and request a Voters' Guide for their district. We print it out and mail it to any voter in Maryland who calls and requests it. We incur printing and mailing costs—always done at no cost to the voter.
3. LWVMD pays for the translation into Spanish of information for State offices on Vote411.org so more voters can use the information. Increasingly, local Leagues want to translate the printed Voters Guide into other languages. LWVMD does not have the resources to support translation for more offices and for more languages.

4. In 2022, LWVMD bought ads on social media. In just 3 days, we reached about 100,000 people across the state; half were under 30 years of age and about half of them continued directly to [Voter411.org](https://Vote411.org). The more voters know about the League's voter information, the more it is used. Just imagine the possibilities if LWMVD could do more.
5. In 2022, LWVMD was asked to print the Voters Guide for the people in jail for a misdemeanor. The officials at the jails were ready to receive and share them. We did not have the money to do this and had to decline. We had to turn its back on giving election information to voters who had the right to vote.

In the coming months, you will hear from LWVMD asking for you to consider helping support our work. We know that you hear such appeals from many different groups. If you are identifying charities to support with your dollars, please consider including LWMVD among the groups you choose to support. And know that we will always value the time, energy and skills that you bring to LWVMD. Thank you.



Linda Kohn, LWVMD President

State Board Meeting Highlights

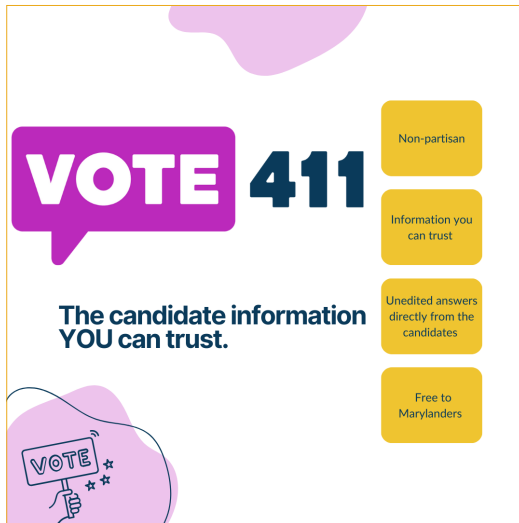
LWVMD needs your help! We are looking for assistance to help us design graphics for our 2024 social media messaging. This is a short-term commitment and can be a great way to build a portfolio. Contact Nikki Tyree, Executive Director at ntyree@lwvmd.org for more info.

In future issues of the SBL, we would like to include examples of activities from local League that may be of interest to other local Leagues in MD, like a successful activity for recruiting new members or a program that attracted non-members to a League event. While any activity would be tailored to fit the local area, let's learn from each other! Send your thoughts to Nikki Tyree, Executive Director at ntyree@lwvmd.org.

Stacey Morrison, SBL editor

Events

Be a Part of Your Democracy



This fall and winter, help LWVMD prep the Voters' Guides! We're asking each member to get involved in their democracy! Below are a few ways you can get involved:

- Help LWVMD produce the Voter's Guides for every Marylander by donating to Vote411.org. You can ensure the LWVMD can buy the Vote411 platform and take on new endeavors like translating the Guides into all the languages.
- Help your local Leagues assemble their Voter's Guides or join the State team to pose questions to our candidates.
- Find out when your local League participates in Voter Education or Registration events and volunteer.
- Join the Election Protection team. 866-OUR-VOTE. Every election cycle, League members volunteer at polling places for Election Protection.

For the first time, LWVMD offers the unique opportunity to become a 'Sponsor of Democracy.' Any person who gives \$80 or more will be listed on our website as a sponsor of the LWVMD Voter's Guides. [Donate today!](#)

Election year 2024 is rapidly approaching and we're already seeing evidence that disinformation will continue to be promoted, aimed at causing confusion and misunderstanding among voters. Voters know that the League of Women Voters stands for facts and this role will be even more important in 2024. LWVMD is planning two events to address this issue. First, Winter Workshop will be held:

LWVMD Winter Workshop
Saturday, January 27, 2024
9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
virtual

We plan to include speakers who can talk about not only the challenges of disinformation, but also how the League and our members might respond.

Second, we are planning a separate event on artificial intelligence (A.I.). In its simplest form, A.I. is the development of computer systems to perform tasks that normally are done by humans. While there can be positive aspects to A.I., there are also concerns that A.I. can worsen disinformation around elections by creating false messages, photographs or other misleading information that spreads quickly especially on social media. Because of its complexity, we are in the process of organizing a separate session, likely in February or March. Look for a notice of it!

Disinformation, A.I., Oh My!



Committees

Ready, Set, Action!



Much has been happening in preparation for the General Assembly Session. League members have been meeting with legislators to discuss bills they will be filing. Also, members and local League boards have been providing feedback on their legislative priorities for 2024; the final priorities will be announced in the next State Board letter. And finally, the Action Team is recruiting volunteer advocates and holding training sessions. The next training webinar will be:

Advocate training webinar

Friday, November 17

3:00 p.m.

It's not too late to join the effort! Contact co-chairs JC Hooker at jchooker@lwvmd.org or Nancy Soreng at nsoreng@lwvmd.org.

LWVMD's advocacy efforts have continuing impacts even when the General Assembly is not in session. Due to the League's engagement in passing civil rights and police accountability legislation, LWVMD member Nancy Soreng was asked to join the Civil Rights Advisory Council which was formed to advise the newly created [Civil Rights Division of the Office of the Attorney General](#). This office has the power to prosecute civil rights violations in such areas as housing, employment, voting, and transportation. At the advisory council's first meeting, members were given three charges for which you are encouraged to provide ideas to help Nancy comply:

- The advisory council is in the process of recruiting and hiring a diverse group of attorneys with experience working in and commitment to civil rights. If you know anyone to suggest, please let Nancy know.
- They expect members to alert the advisory council of cases of systemic civil rights violation in the members' communities and networks.
- They want the various groups who were recruited to the advisory council to stay engaged for the long haul.

In addition, because of the LWVMD's prior work, Nancy was invited to attend a press conference where the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) announced a groundbreaking initiative called the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MJEC). Its mission is to address the disparities in the incarceration of African Americans and other marginalized groups in Maryland's prisons and jails. Recommendations will be developed to address issues such as reforms in prison and jail facilities; services that would promote successful re-entry into the community; criminal laws and sentencing procedures; changes in policing training and accountability; and how behavioral health and human services can become an alternative to criminal penalties or incarceration. While the LWVMD is not a member of this initiative, the League will follow their work and will support their legislative recommendations when opportunities arise.

Nancy Soreng, Action Co-Chair

Committees

LWVMD is partnering with [Schaefer Center for Public Policy](#) at the University of Baltimore, [WBAL-TV](#), the [Baltimore Sun](#) newspaper, and [WYPR](#) radio to host candidate forums for the 2024 Senatorial race. We will host two primary forums, one for republican candidates and one for democrat candidates. We will also host one general election Senate forum.

These forums will be in-person and broadcast on WBAL-TV. Dates and locations to be determined.

Gail Sunderman, LWVMD Candidate Forums

LWVMD 2024 Candidate Forums



Distracted Driving Study



At the June 2023 LWVMD Convention, delegates approved a study on Distracted Driving; we are now seeking members who are interested in being a part of this study.

Members would study the causes of distracted driving and options for addressing the problem, including preparation of a fact sheet summarizing the findings. If needed, options may be offered for how to update LWVMD's current position on drunk driving. No experience necessary! Just a curiosity and willingness to learn. If you might be interested, please send an email to President Linda Kohn at pres@lwvmd.org.

Linda Kohn, LWVMD President

A committee has been formed to study the LWVMD's current position on local control of education. Committee members include:

Nancy Diamond	Baltimore City
Tori Rose	Baltimore City
Jilie Gill	Kent County
Kathy Ruckman	Kent County
Jamie Langlie	Montgomery County
Judy Morenoff	Montgomery County
Katie Delezenski	Wicomico County
Jana Barberio	

Gail Sunderman, chair, has scheduled an initial meeting in November.

Gail Sunderman, LWVMD Local Control of Education Study

Local Control of Education Study

