



It's been about six months since we last published a newsletter and we've been busy!

Annual Meeting - April 2023

Guest Speaker

Our annual meeting was well attended and successful. Tonya Aikens, President and CEO of the Howard County Library System joined us to discuss the plans for the new lakefront library. Her talk was informative and garnered much interest from attending members, who came to a consensus in favor of supporting the concept of a multi-generational, multi-use space. Members were especially supportive of the plans to offer fun learning opportunities for children age birth-five, and to connect people of all ages within a shared educational space.

Although all attendees were in favor of the concept, some expressed concerns about the initial expenses and the long-term costs of such a large facility. We will continue to follow the community discussions surrounding the project and opportunities to provide input.

To learn more about about the project, or to complete a survey to share your thoughts, visit:

<http://hclibrary.org/about-us/downtown-columbia-branch/>

Highlights

Membership voted on the two major budget changes discussed in our Annual Meeting Workbook. We voted in favor of ending our lease with Historic Oakland to find a more affordable space. LWVHC will be coordinating with Association of Community Services for our mailing address, meeting rooms, and phone line, and will move our belongings to a storage unit.

We also reluctantly voted in favor of cutting our employment of an office manager, which was no longer sustainable under our budget restraints.

Additionally, members voted in support of hiring bookkeeper on contract to assist in managing our finances and bringing our records up-to-date.

Midsummer Night Gala at Robinson Nature Center

Our first major event for 2023 will be our Fundraiser on **June 22, 7-9 pm at Robinson Nature Center**. We will have food, wine, full use of the nature center and a showing of Dynamic Earth, an award-winning film narrated by Liam Neeson in the planetarium. Ticket sales will end on Sunday June 18. Each ticket is \$50. If you plan to attend, buy your ticket now.

Buy a ticket

Hot Topics Speaker Series

On May 18th, we heard from Dr. Sara Via who shared practical solutions to the Climate Change problem and provided us with practical ways to take action. As an FYI, we share the recordings from our Hot Topic Series on both our Facebook Page and our YouTube channel (pictured below). We also provide a summary on our website.



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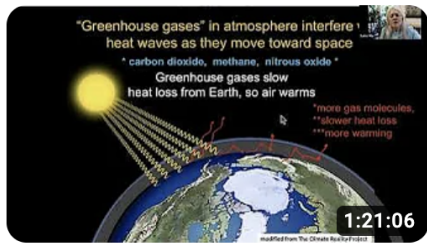
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State Convention in Frederick MD

Howard County was represented by our President, Krista Threefoot and Vice President, Laura Mettle. A big take-away from the convention was that we are not alone in our struggles.

Other leagues are also struggling with aging membership, lack of active participation of members and a lack of interest in discussing or learning about issues.

We, and the other leagues, have learned that the best way to grow a diverse membership is to be present. Please read below to see how we are striving to be more visible in our local community.

Your local League in Action

Here are a just a few of the events we have taken part in during May and June.

Simulated Congressional Hearings

Between May 5th and June 8th, 2023, every single one of HCPSS' 4,300 fifth-graders took on the role of Constitutional expert on a topic covered by the Social Studies curriculum: "The American Revolution", "Building a New Nation", "Challenges of a New Nation", and "We the People." Through a formal presentation on their assigned topics and a series of follow-up questions from panels of community leaders, students participated in a performance-based assessment designed to demonstrate their understanding of the founding of our Constitution and its impact and application in history and today. The League was represented among the volunteer judges at more than half of the district's 42 elementary schools by President Krista Threefoot, Director Ellen Flynn Giles, and Member Beth Hufnagel. Kudos to all who contribute each year to this unique educational opportunity to build civic understanding, advocacy, and responsibility, and grow future voters!

Voter Registration at Reservoir High School-May

The staff at Reservoir High School requested our help at an assembly for seniors. Linda Frascarella, Ellen Flynn Giles and Maureen Stang staffed a 'voter registration' table. We gave students a brief overview on how to register and provided students with a business card that has a link to our website. Thank you to all the members who volunteered to help at this event.

Marriotts Ridge Student Council - May

Laura Mettle represented us at the Student Councils' Women Legislative panel at Marriotts Ridge. It was a delightful evening. About 30 students, all very interested in politics, came to ask questions. They noted that they love our Voters Guide and modeled their guide for the student member elections after ours.

How can I help?

There are many opportunities for the League engage the community. People reach out to us using the 'contact us' form on our website, asking us to help at various events. In addition, members of the league who are involved in the schools or other community groups, bring events to our attention.

What we are missing is someone who can coordinate all of this. There are events schedule almost every weekend throughout Howard County. You may have attended some of them yourself. For example, Wine in the Woods, the African American Community Roundtable of Howard County Community Health Fair and so much more.

If you would like to get more involved and help, please let us know. Email us at Office-HoCo@lwvmd.org.

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