

THE VOTER

A Quarterly Newsletter of the LWVAAC

June 2022, Issue 125

June Calendar

LGBTQ+ Pride Month, June 1 - 30

LWVAAC Board Meeting (virtual) Tue,
June 14, 6 - 8 p.m.

LWVMD Civic Education & Youth
Engagement Working Group (virtual)
Wed, June 15, 10:30 a.m.

Moral March on Washington, Sat, Jun
18, 10 a.m. Washington, D.C.

[Juneteenth Parade](#) and Festival, Sat,
June 18, 12 - 9:30 p.m., Annapolis

Juneteenth, Sun, June 19

LWVUS Convention (virtual and in
Denver, CO) Thu, Jun 23 - Sun, Jun 26

LWVMD DEI Book Club (virtual) Tue,
Jun 28, 4 - 5 p.m.

LWVAAC Annual Retreat (in person),
Tue, Aug 16, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Lake Waterford Park, Pasadena

Photo by [Steve Johnson](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Table of Contents

Vice President's Letters	2-3
Action & Advocacy	3
Voter Services	4-6
Member News	7-9
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	10-11
County Insights	12-17
Community Outreach	18
Deeper Dive: Gun Legislation	19-20
References	21

LWVAAC Contacts

Alfa Stevens, President, pres@lwvaacmd.org

Alexis Dorsey, VP, vp@lwvaacmd.org

Voter Services, votersvc@lwvaacmd.org

Membership Team, membership@lwvaacmd.org

Editorial Staff, editor@lwvaacmd.org

LWVAAC Directors, board-aac@lwvmd.org

Online

Website: www.lwvaacmd.org

Facebook: @lwvaac Phone: 443-672-8270

Join/Renew: www.lwvaacmd.org/join2

Donate: lwvaacmd.org/efdonation

Voter Toolkit: lwvaacmd.org/voter_toolkit

VOTE411.org



Vice President's Letter



As the LWVAAC Vice Presidency transitions from Gail Viamonte to me, some things may change (hair color for one), but many League practices will remain the same. After all, this is an election year.

Our League will continue to sponsor candidates' forums. Nothing can give voters a clearer understanding of their choices than this type of face-to-face event. Currently on the LWVAAC radar is an August candidates' forum co-sponsored and hosted by Heritage Harbour Community in Annapolis (see p. 6).

The LWVAAC Voter Services team also has spent countless hours gathering and organizing the candidates' responses for the Voter's Guide, online at VOTE411.org and in print. Presenting the candidates' positions in their own words and explaining the ballot is an important way the League aids voters. We hope you (our members) will volunteer to help inform the public about these valuable resources (see p. 4).

On August 16, the LWVAAC will hold its Annual Retreat. The retreat is when we focus our attention on our priorities and upcoming programs to set our calendar for the coming year. Several members expressed hope that we might gather in person so, to accommodate all, we plan to meet outdoors in a cool place. Please join us.

As we work our way through Summer, with a short break, and into the Fall, let's always remember our purpose. Our commitment is to provide the information and guidance voters need to make wise choices when they vote; that never changes!

~ Alexis Dorsey

As Neil, my husband, and I anticipate our move to the West coast, that undertaking feels simultaneously exhilarating, heart-rending, unimaginable--and as scary as any change I've ever contemplated. "You are irreplaceable," I tell myself. "Not so fast—I'm still around." In addition to my remaining on the Board, I hope to see many of you, individually and collectively, through official League activities and personal contact. Still, I do want to express my deep appreciation for the support, respect, insightful perspectives, mentoring, and other gifts you've each and all offered. I'm deeply grateful and multiply gifted, for my opportunities as a member, Board member, and Vice President to work and learn with you.



Most recently, LWVAAC offered two highly-rated and extremely well-attended public programs, each of which targeted League priorities: civics education and environmental amelioration.

Action and Advocacy

Campaign Financing System Petition Needs Your Help

By Abby Root & Susan Cochran, Directors and Action Co-Chairs

In February, the LWVAAC supported [County Council Resolution 1-22](#), an amendment to the County Charter to require the establishment of a public campaign financing system for candidates for County Executive and the County Council. If passed by a super majority (at least 5 of the 7 Council members), the proposed amendment to the Charter would have appeared on the November 2022 ballot to let the voters decide. Unfortunately, the resolution did not pass. As a result, a petition drive to put the question on the November ballot is underway with the guidance of several organizations, including LWVAAC, Progressive Maryland, and Common Cause, and supported by a \$75,000 grant.

Your help is needed to get the 10,000 signatures required to have the public campaign finance amendment on the ballot in November. The goal is to collect the required number of signatures by the end of June so each can be verified and the petition process completed by August.

Please click [here](#) to download the petition. One sheet has spaces for 5 signatures. Please ask registered county voters among your family, friends, and neighbors to sign the petition. You will be the circulator, so complete the information on the bottom of the form. Mail the form(s) to Abby Root, LWVAAC Action, P.O. Box 35, Arnold, MD 21012. #

Vice President's Letter (continued from p. 2)

Concurrently, Voter Services furthered and deepened its reach, into Corrections and post-incarceration support, as well as higher education. Action has wrestled with ever-changing initiatives to support a vote on public financing of county elections. While technically under the auspices of LWVMD, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programming not only continues to be strong (see article p. 10), but also infuses its spirit across many of our processes. And have you seen our amazing and ever-evolving website!

All it takes is a deep dive into the [2022 Annual Workbook](#) and/or recollections of the lively and enriching April Annual Meeting to recognize the depth, breadth, and efficacy of our League, as accomplished through our members and leaders, in joint collegiality and congeniality.

~ Gail Viamonte

Voter Services

VOTE411 & Voters' Guides

Excerpted from the May 2022 State Board Letter

On June 4, [VOTE411.org](https://vote411.org) went live to the public. LWVAAC's print Voters' Guides became available on June 10. Now it's every League member's job to make sure voters know about these resources. how to use them and where to find them.



First, familiarize yourself with the [Voter Toolkit](#) on the LWVAAC [website](#). Dazzle your family and friends with your voting knowledge!

Next, share what you've learned. There are lots of ways to get the word out.

- Send the VOTE411 website link to your personal contacts and work or faith affiliations.
- Distribute the link and other materials to your coalition and community partners.
- Post the link on any listserve to which you subscribe, such as Nextdoor.
- Hand out VOTE411 cards and Voters' Guides at community events.
- Ask the businesses you frequent to display VOTE411 cards and print Guides.
- Promote VOTE411.org and the LWVAAC website at League events. #

Key Voting/Election Dates

June 4: Ballots mailed to voters who have requested mail-in ballots

June 7-10: Thirty-two (32) ballot drop boxes will be placed throughout AACo

June 23: Public demonstration of election equipment at BoE Hdqtrs

June 28: Last day to register to vote (online or by mail), update registration information, or change party affiliation prior to Primary election

July 7-14: In person early voting, 9 sites, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day

July 12: Last day to request mail-in ballot

July 19: Primary Election Day, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

August 1: Voter registration resumes for General election

Sept 24: Ballots mailed to voters who have requested mail-in ballots

Oct 18: Last day to register to vote in General Election, update registration, or change party affiliation

Oct 27-Nov 3: Early voting (in person), 7 a.m.– 8 p.m. each day

Nov 8: General Election Day, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

County & League Prepare for the Primary Election

By Vera Herath, Director and Voter Services Co-Chair

In mid-March, the Maryland State Court of Appeals postponed the Gubernatorial Primary Election from June 28 to July 19, in response to legal challenges to proposed redistricting maps. The issue was resolved on April 4 when Governor Larry Hogan signed into law a second General Assembly-drawn Congressional redistricting map, after Attorney General Brian Frosh dropped the state's appeal. This allowed the Anne Arundel County Board of Elections (BoE) to really put the pedal to the metal to finalize preparations. Probably one of the most difficult tasks was realigning districts and precincts, where needed, to comply with the new Congressional and legislative districts. This process was completed and accepted on May 12. In addition, the candidate filing deadline was extended (yet again) to April 15. A total of 97 candidates filed for all County offices.

Early voting dates are now July 7-14. The county has nine early voting sites. The new Primary date caused a conflict for five early voting locations, so the BoE had to find replacement sites.

The BoE continues to process mail-in ballot applications. Be sure to request yours by Tuesday, July 12, if you plan to vote by mail.

Election judge training has begun and BoE is still hiring. As of May 11, 90

percent of the positions had been filled but more are needed if you're interested.

A new feature this election year is the Election Day Page Program, where students aged 14 and 15 work four-hour shifts on Election Day, thereby earning service-learning credit. Students 16 and older may participate but are encouraged to instead register as election judges. As of May 11, five Pages have been recruited.

The LWVAAC Voter Services team has steadily been active registering voters. During the month of March, our member volunteers participated in high school voter registration drives that netted 254 new registrations. Students may register at age 16 but cannot vote until they are 18 years old. Also in March, the LWVAAC was invited to speak to students at the Anne Arundel Community College's *Lunch and Learn: Voting 101* event (see below).



AACC Students prepare for the 2022 elections. (Photo by V. Herath.)

[continued from p. 5]

Most recently voter services volunteers staffed a table at the 2nd Annual Annapolis Pride Festival on June 4 to provide voter registration assistance and election information. We're slated to do the same at upcoming Juneteenth festivities.

We anticipate many more opportunities to register and inform voters this election year. Training to become a registrar and recertification for voter registration volunteers is available through the Anne Arundel Board of Elections. To request voter registrar training, call the BOE at 410-222-0411.

Questions? Contact LWVAAC Voter Services: votersvc@lwvaacmd.org. #



LWVAAC had a banner turnout for voter registration at the recent Second Annual Annapolis Pride Parade and Festival. (Photo by K. Larrabee)

Post-Primary Candidates' Forum Planning Underway

By Vicki Jordan, Director and Voter Services Co-Chair

Our League has the honor of co-sponsoring a Candidates' Forum with the Civic Association of Heritage Harbour Homeowners on August 29 at 7 p.m. at the Heritage Harbour Community Lodge. We will be hosting the candidates for County Executive and County Council, District 6. Heritage Harbour is a 55+ community of over 1600 homes, so we anticipate a very good turnout. This forum is open to Heritage Harbour Community members and their guests. We are excited to collaborate with Heritage Harbour and offer them the benefit of the Leagues' forum experience.

Voter Services is also looking at the possibility of hosting a virtual candidates' forum this fall prior to the November 8 General Election. We are looking at best practices employed at the State League level and researching the mechanics of hosting a successful virtual forum. We welcome the help of any League members who would like to assist. Email votersvc@lwvaacmd.org. #

HELP WANTED

LWVAAC Voter Services needs you! Whether you volunteer once or join the team, your contribution will make a difference.

Contact
votersvc@lwvaacmd.org
to find the right
opportunity for you.

Member News

“Bee” a Voting Pollinator

By Kathy Larrabee, Director and Membership Chair

For many of us, warm weather focuses our attention on pairing pots and plants in pleasing arrangements or generally enjoying beautifully blooming landscapes created in large part by nearly invisible pollinators. Like the discrete pollinator population, League members have many opportunities to pollinate the voting landscape by helping family, friends, and acquaintances bloom into educated voters, who may engage in civic activities beyond voting.

There are numerous ways you may become an active League pollinator without formal training, joining a committee, or getting tangled in organizational bureaucracy. While becoming a certified registrar is optimal, you may also refer non-voters to the [Anne Arundel County Board of Elections](#) website for online registration. Another way to be a valued League pollinator is to familiarize yourself with the many information resources and sophisticated tools the League puts at your fingertips.

Check out the [LWVAAC website](#), one stop for a lot of voter information. On this site, the [Voter Toolkit](#) is an invaluable resource. There, click on [Your Elected Officials](#) to see who represents you at the federal, state, and local levels and to get their contact information. Learn about [VOTE411.org](#), the League’s online Voters’ Guide that serves the nation. Simply type in your address for a wealth of information—no need to flip through printed pages to find the information

you seek. However, if you prefer paper, you can download a PDF version to print yourself from [our website](#), pick up a newsprint version at any AACo public library or email votersvc@lwvaacmd.org to receive a print voters’ guide by USPS mail.



If you want to take your new knowledge of voting information to social media, write a comment on your Facebook page or on Instagram and link your post to the LWVAAC Toolkit. Maybe your neighborhood has an online group page, as mine does. You may be surprised by how grateful neighbors will be to receive a few trusted links for credible, unbiased voting information. You can assure them every candidate’s submission to the League’s guide, online or printed, is presented verbatim, unedited.

Begin your self education now in order to help others prepare for early voting starting on July 7 and election day on July 19. Feel the satisfaction of being a knowledgeable League pollinator. #

Welcome New Members

Annapolis:	Nancy and Molly Folks
	Vicki Hutchins
	Stephanie Martinez
	Valerie Nichols
	Pamela Strandquist
Crownsville:	Kim Moninghoff

Face of Our League

Margaret (Peg) Tierney Anzalone

Q: When and where did you first join the League; what prompted you to join?

A: I first joined the Howard County League in the early 80s, prompted by a posting in the Columbia Flier where League meetings were regularly listed. At the time, I was taking the University of Maryland paralegal courses and getting interested in local government, thinking that civic engagement would be helpful in getting a job as a paralegal. In fact, it was! Little did I realize, however, that joining the local League would be much more than a strategy for getting a job. The League has been a continuing learning experience and helped me adapt and be involved in the different communities where I have lived.

Q: What civics issues do you care most about?

A: Voting, Voter Registration, and Environmental Justice. Last year, my eldest daughter surprised me with the news that she had just joined the Kitsap County League in Washington State because the local League's candidate Zoom forums were the only way she could learn about the candidates. Even though we live far apart, I feel she is closer now.

Q: What was your primary career?

A: In 2007, I retired from the Maryland Department of Health where I served in management positions at the

State medical board. It was during my interview in 1985 that I was asked to talk about my involvement with the Howard County League that was listed on my resume. A few years later I learned that it was my response to that question that helped me get the job. So, I figure I owe the League a debt of gratitude for the job I loved for over 20 years.

Q: What might other League members be interested in knowing about you?

A: Born in New Rochelle, NY and graduated from the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, NY with a B.A. degree in English and a New York license to teach English. I met George, my husband, when we both were high school teachers in Yonkers, New York. Later, in 1976, we moved from Somers, NY, to Columbia, MD. I earned a Master's in Administrative Science degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1985 while working as a paralegal at a large Baltimore law firm. After our 2 girls finished school in 1995, we moved to Dorchester County where George finally got to sail and fish. I got involved with the grassroots environmental organization Dorchester Citizens for Planned Growth, Inc. I served on the board until we moved to Annapolis in 2021. We're enjoying living close to our younger daughter and family--three "Grand" girls in Millersville, and also getting to know Chester, their talented, active border collie. #

George and Peg Anzalone on vacation in 2019.



Annual Membership Meeting Highlights

By Kathy Larrabee, Director and Membership Chair

LWVAAC held its annual meeting of the membership in early Spring, as stipulated in our bylaws. LWVAAC members met on Saturday, April 9, at the Annapolis Doubletree by Hilton Hotel. Many members arrived early for a chance to chat over coffee before getting down to business. The business agenda was followed by a delicious brunch buffet. Yes, hotel food can be delicious. The morning concluded with a prominent speaker, as is the practice each year. Appropriately, this year's speaker, Andrea Mansfield, Chair of the Anne Arundel County Charter Revision Commission, offered League members an inside look at the Commission's process of reviewing the County's charter every 10 years and recommending changes, including redistricting to reflect new census data. (See article, p. 14.)



The 2022 Annual Membership Meeting, April 9 at the DoubleTree Annapolis. (photo by K. Larrabee.)

All local Leagues nationwide hold an annual membership meeting to help set the stage for the following program year. In keeping with the LWV's grassroots foundation, members must vote each year to elect new Board officers and directors, adopt a budget and recommended



(l-r) Speaker Andrea Mansfield reunites with her former mentor, LWVAAC Director Carol Sures. (Photo by K. Larrabee.)

bylaws changes, reaffirm League positions, and transact other pressing business. In addition, members provide input on local issues that would be appropriate for the Board to consider for action. At this meeting, LWVAAC members expressed support for participating in a petition drive to add a public campaign finance charter amendment to the 2022 general election ballot and suggested that our League establish a mentorship for young people.

As prescribed, a month before the Annual Meeting, all members are given supporting documents. Members also received a meeting workbook which chronicles activities of the past year; portfolio directors report on activities within their focus areas. If you missed seeing the [2022 Workbook](#), take a moment to review the content. Despite lingering COVID-related challenges, the LWVAAC steered a steady course within its two largest portfolios: Action/Outreach and Voter Services. It also held several member activities and events. Membership grew steadily. #

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

How to be an ally? Be part of the solution

By Sara Sanders, LWVAAC Director & LWVMD Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Chair

When I first started on a personal journey to better understand diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), I was almost immediately confronted with the uncomfortable truth about my own privilege. As a cisgender (aka not transgender), straight, white woman, I never really thought about the perceived, and real, power and privilege our society might gift me simply by virtue of who I am.

Growing up, I had been “othered” myself as a half-Jewish atheist in a very Christian community in Texas. As an adult, I was paid about \$10,000 less in annual salary than a less-qualified, less-experienced male colleague for a comparable job. When I confronted my employer I was told that if I leave “they may not find someone as good as” me, but they’d “find someone” rather than giving me a raise. That being said, I also have been sassy to a cop at a traffic stop and have walked away unscathed, with only an \$84 illegal U-turn ticket in my pocket to show for it. My family has been able to accumulate wealth. I went to good public schools, lived in safe communities, and accessed needed healthcare.

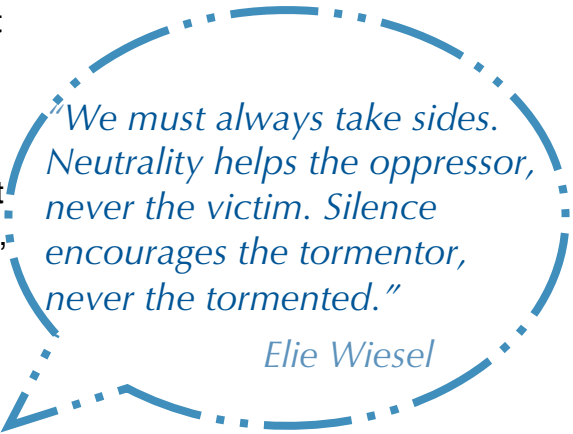
I start with my own story here to showcase that privilege can be both deeply felt when it is not afforded to you and easy to overlook when it is and, also, to show that it is relative and can change based on your surroundings. Plus, understanding your own privilege is key to understanding your opportunities to be an ally.

So, what exactly is an ally?

“An ally,” according to [Chikere Igboke](#), Founder and DEI consultant at [Inclusive](#) and [Allyship](#), “is someone who uses their power and privilege to advocate for others who do not have that power and privilege. Allies are not members of marginalized groups.” Groups can be marginalized based on any number of attributes, such as

gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, language, accent, or ability status to name a few.

An ally could look like my husband shutting down sexist trolls on the fantasy football app to make it a better place for the women who play, or my pushing back at the preschool when a young Black girl was called a “troublemaker” and a “bad influence” for simply being a kid when playing with my daughter. Little acts make the world better. Or, it could be advocating for police reform when Black and Brown people are



“We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”

Elie Wiesel

[continued from p. 10]

mistreated or killed at the hands of those sworn to protect us and helping to transform systems that consistently keep certain people down.

How does one start to become an ally?

First, recognize your privilege. Remember, you might have privilege in certain ways and not in others, and the only way you'll be able to use it is if you accept that you have it.

Not sure what your privilege is or how it shows up everyday? Start simply by listening and learning. Here are a few ways to get started:

- ◆ Seek out learning about the experiences of people who are different from you and believe those experiences.
- ◆ Participate in a DEI book club (the LWVMD hosts a virtual one). Read books and articles to learn about the history that isn't always taught in school about structural racism, the fight for LGBTQ rights, or the shortcomings of the League's own beloved fight for women's right to vote.
- ◆ Learn about implicit bias and how to recognize microaggressions. Reflect on when you experience them, when you witness them, or when you (even accidentally or unintentionally) have perpetrated a microaggression against someone else.
- ◆ Find a friend who also wants to be an ally and support each other in the journey. Read books or articles together, share your reflections and experiences, and encourage each other.

Ok, I'm ready to be an ally! 🥰

Becoming an ally doesn't happen overnight. As someone who has been trying to be an ally for years, I can tell you that the journey never ends. The best advice I can give you is to start using your power.

Here are a few suggestions:

- ◆ Speak up using your voice. Don't be afraid to respectfully push back against hateful or discriminatory speech. Use "I" statements as much as possible.
- ◆ Amplify ideas and voices from those who may not have the privilege you do. "I really like the ideas [name] shared" "[Name], I'd love to hear what you think."
- ◆ Seek out a diverse slate of speakers for events.
- ◆ Champion someone who is different from you. This could be mentoring someone new, inviting someone to join a group or step into a leadership position. Support them throughout the process.
- ◆ Recognize and confront your own biases. Do you have preconceived notions about certain people? Question why you might think those things and start to unlearn behaviors you learned previously.

What if I make a mistake?

As you strive to be an ally, I assure you: you will make mistakes. That's often what happens when we try something new. Just reflect, and keep trying. Don't be afraid to apologize when you make a mistake - it can go a long way. Try to be open to feedback from those whom you are trying to support. As an ally, endeavor to listen and follow.

Being an ally is a journey that can be fulfilling, heartbreaking, difficult, and rewarding. I encourage you to recognize your power and use it for good. And remember, the only way you can learn something new is by leaving your comfort zone. #

[Resources and additional reading are listed on page 21.]



County Insights

Anne Arundel County Charter Governance

By Susan Cochran, Director and Action Co-Chair

As the Anne Arundel County Charter Review Commission concludes its decennial review of the 57-year-old County Charter, it is appropriate to acquaint ourselves with the origin of the Charter and some of the changes over the years.

Anne Arundel is one of 11 Maryland counties that have adopted a charter system of government. Anne Arundel County adopted its charter in 1964, the fourth jurisdiction to do so. (Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Baltimore County preceded us.) Most of the other 12 Maryland counties have a commission form of government, usually with a county administrator. Under the commission form, all local public laws are enacted by the Maryland Legislature and approved by the Governor. The charter system, however, allows the local government to exercise more power and make most of its own decisions. Called “home rule,” it is provided for in the Maryland Constitution in Article X-A, Section 1. Some powers are still reserved to the State, such as setting a maximum property assessment percentage, dictating minimum funding for schools, and setting minimum health standards.

In the 1950s and 1960s, as Anne Arundel grew, it became apparent that the commission form of government was not up to dealing with the growth of the county and the complexities of

modern government. In the 1962 election, county voters passed a referendum to pursue a charter form of government. A Charter Board was established, and with the help of a consulting firm, a County Charter was proposed in 1963.

In the Charter Board’s summary of conclusions for the [proposed Charter](#), some of the problems of the commission form of government are described. The County Commissioners had executive responsibilities, legislative responsibilities and sometimes, judicial powers, all of which could be abused. The maintenance of the county roads is an example of Commissioner-controlled “kingdoms” where a district Commissioner decided what roads should be built or improved and contracted with the people to do the work in their district. This type of governing led to what the Charter Board report referred to as a “spoilage” system. Representation by the Commissioners was not equal, as the districts were not equal in population.

The Charter Board supported a form of government that clearly delineated responsibilities and duties between an executive and legislative department, with a professional system of employees under supervision of an elected County Executive and an elected County Council, representing seven districts of equal population. Judicial responsibilities were assigned to a Board of Appeals, a hearing officer, and a planning and zoning officer.

[continued from p. 12]

The Charter lays out the method of election and duties of the County Executive and the County Council. It dictates a 4-year term of office for County Executive and County Council members, with a limit of 2 consecutive terms. It divides the county into seven districts and dictates that the districts be equal in population, based on the decennial census. At the time of adoption, a strange, to us, State law required that candidates be nominated by their political parties by district, but stand for election by the whole county. For example, Virginia Clagett, elected to the County Council from District 7 in 1974, had to campaign over the entire county for two election cycles. As State law changed and the Charter was amended to conform to it, a Council-hopeful was elected only by the voters in their district.

The Charter prescribes how the Charter may be amended. Every ten years after the decennial census, a Charter Revision Commission is appointed by the County Council with each Councilperson appointing one member. The Commission recommends Charter amendments to the County Council, which must approve any amendment by a super-majority of 5-3 to place it on the November ballot for consideration by county voters. Charter amendments may also be proposed by a County Councilmember or by the

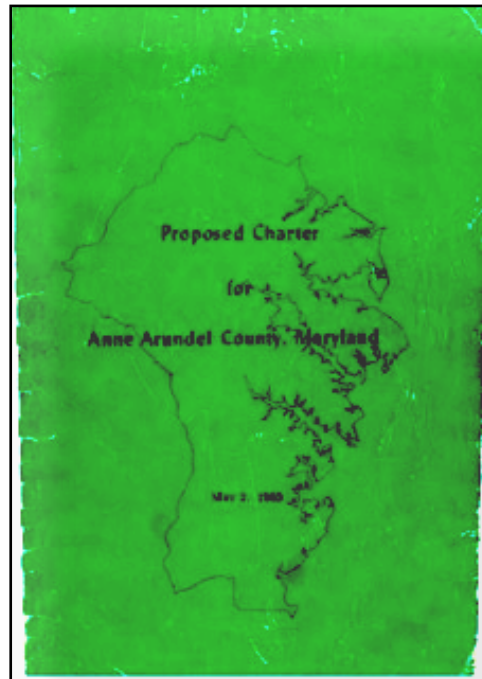
County Executive, requiring the same vote. Citizens may initiate a Charter amendment to be placed on the ballot with a petition signed by at least 10,000 registered County voters.

As an example, the Charter was amended in 2012 to allow for a County Executive's or County Councilmember's removal from office should they be found guilty of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, misfeasance or malfeasance. The original Charter contained no such provision.

In the [foreward of the proposed Charter](#), the Charter Commission thanked the League of Women Voters for their suggestions. This is an example of how League members can make a difference when we are knowledgeable and engaged with our local government. An important part of the charter

system is vigilant citizens and organizations that observe the government and contribute thoughts about county affairs through testimony to the Charter Review Commission, County Council and other public entities.

The League has great respect for the hardworking citizens who in 1963 instituted these very important reforms and adopted the Charter that is the basis of our County government today. #



Charter Commission Submits Report to Council

By Kathy Larrabee, Director

The County Charter was the focus of the keynote address at LWVAAC's 2022 Annual Meeting, held April 9 at the DoubleTree Hilton Annapolis. Andrea Mansfield, Chair of the 2021 Anne Arundel County Charter Revision Commission offered both historical perspective and fresh insights into our county's governing document.

Following U.S. Census reports every 10 years, the Anne Arundel County Council appoints a Charter Revision Commission, as required by the Charter. The composition is three members nominated by the Anne Arundel County Council and four selected by the County Executive (subject to the approval of the Council). Ms. Mansfield, selected by the Council, was then chosen by her Commission peers to serve as chair. The purpose of the Commission is to conduct a comprehensive study of the charter based on new census data, recommend changes, and ensure geographical equity in the County's councilmanic districts.

She recounted to League members the Commission's challenges, including a late start as a result of the delayed release of census results. She explained the Commission's commitment and timeline for public input to drawing new councilmanic districts and other issues. She said the Commission held a number of public hearings virtually, which allowed for greater citizen participation. She praised the assistance provided by AACo Planning and Zoning to the Commission to help determine the best map options as a starting point for fair redistricting.

Since the Annual Meeting, the Commission has completed a draft report and invited public comment, [finalized and adopted the draft report](#), and submitted the final draft to the County Council for its consideration. Any Charter amendment adopted by resolution of the County Council before August will go out to the voters of Anne Arundel County in the form of a question on the November 2022 ballot. If a majority of the voters support any Charter amendment, then it will become law in December. #



Anne Arundel County Charter Revision Commission Chair Andrea Mansfield addressing LWVAAC members at the 2022 Annual Meeting on April 9. (Photo by K. Larrabee.)

LWVAAC Earth Day Celebration Relived

By Peg Anzalone, LWVAAC Member

“We have a Climate Crisis!”

The LWVAAC Zoom audience loudly repeated -- in unison -- back to Matt Johnston, lead speaker at the LWVAAC's April 21, 2022 Earth Day commemoration, entitled *Environmental Challenges and Solutions in Anne Arundel County*.

From there, Matt gave an upbeat summary of his experiences and several policy accomplishments during his 3 years as Anne Arundel County's first Director of Environmental Policy.* One change that he observed during his tenure: until recently the environmental buzzword in Anne Arundel County has been “restoration” but now it is “resiliency.”

Matt described actions to make the County more resilient ranging from departmental changes at Planning & Zoning and Inspections and Permits, and additional funding to Parks and Rec, to major policy initiatives including [Forest Conservation Ordinance #68-19](#), considered the most significant improvement to forest protection in 30 years; [Plan 2040](#), a comprehensive strategy for redevelopment around transit hubs and conservation of open spaces, and [The Green Infrastructure Master Plan](#) that calls for the conservation of 30 percent of the County's landscape by 2030.

Matt cited recent storm surges and rain events to illustrate why climate change is a crisis in Anne Arundel County, particularly in low lying areas

like the Shady Side peninsula. A high-tide event in October 2021 showed a 3.5 inch rise in sea level. Resiliency experts define a type of “planning storm,” as a storm with a designated number of inches of rainfall over a 24-hour-period. For more than 30 years, Maryland had been using the same metric for planning storms. One immediate improvement, Matt said, is a recent requirement to update planning storm metrics every 5 years.

Matt is optimistic about the newly created Resilience Authority of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County and its ability to utilize flooding information to engage in a public-private needs assessments, tackle engineering requirements, and enable the financing of projects to mitigate the impact of flooding. The Resilience Authority will have the benefit of regularly updated flooding data to do its job.

Matt challenged the audience with an easy to remember To-Do list: (1) plant a tree; (2) stop using fertilizer; and (3) make a personal plan to get off fossil fuels by 2030.

To conclude, the LWVAAC Zoom audience gave a loud call back in unison,

“We have a climate crisis and an opportunity!”

*Matt has since left his position in County government to become Executive Director of the Arundel Rivers Federation. Early in 2022, LWVAAC's Programming Chair, Marguerite Duffy, interviewed Matt about his experience working in the administration and the challenges of climate change. The full interview may be found in the [March 2022](#) issue of [The Voter](#), page 7. #

Household Waste: Curbside to County

By Peg Anzalone

At the LWVAAC Earth Day 2022 event, Rich Bowen, Anne Arundel County's Recycling Program Manager, urged customers to "Recycle Right" by thinking carefully before tossing things into the single-stream system. He explained the habit of "wish cycling" when customers place non-recyclable items in the cart or container with the hope that they will be recycled. Wish cycling leads to contamination and can lead to fines and cost increases, he said. Common culprits include plastic bags and wraps, cable cords, scrap metal, Styrofoam, clothes and textiles, batteries and lightbulbs. [Click here for more information on how to recycle smart.](#)

The County's single stream recycling is processed by Waste Management Recycle America (WMRA), North America's largest recycler. Its facility located in Elkridge receives commingled materials that are separated using a combination of equipment and manual labor. Material is then bailed and marketed to end-users. WMRA is in the process of building a new state-of-the-art recycling center near its existing Elkridge center.

Rich encourages customers to consider backyard composting. The Department of Public Works (DPW) offers free hoop style compost bins for pick up at designated recycling centers. For those who want to do "a little bit more," Rich suggests dropping off sorted glass, kitchen scraps and textiles at one of three regional DPW

locations (see p. 21). While glass can be put in the single stream recycling collection bins, sorting it by color at one of the designated centers sends it toward making new glass rather than mixed with other material by the WMRA.

[Information on recycling centers.](#) #

See p. 21 for additional resources.

LWVAAC Summary of Positions

Waste Management

We believe every individual must take responsibility for his or her waste and must change disposal habits.

(Adopted 1990, modified 1994)

Community Solutions: Master Garden Outreach

By Peg Anzalone

Speaking at the 2022 LWVAAC Earth Day commemoration, Nancy Allred, Interim Master Gardener Coordinator for Anne Arundel County, addressed healthy soil practices, how to reduce waste by composting, climate resilient landscape methods, and planting for wildlife benefit, especially native pollinators. Anne Arundel County Master Gardeners support the University of Maryland Extension mission by educating residents about safe, effective and sustainable horticultural practices that build healthy gardens, landscapes, and communities.

[see page 17}]

[continued from p. 16]

Many LWVAAC members are familiar with the Anne Arundel County Ask-a-Master Gardener Plant Clinics at the Anne Arundel and Severna Park farmers' markets and at the Crofton library. Nancy explained that any gardening questions can be put to the Master Gardeners on duty. If they don't know the answer, they will try their best to

research and respond via email.

Master Gardeners encourage composting to reduce waste and maintain the Composting and Native Gardens site at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis where Master

Composters give hour-long compost demonstrations from May through November. Attendees receive a free compost bin, provided by the Anne Arundel County Department of Recycling and information (goodie) bag filled with printed materials explaining various ways of composting.

The Anne Arundel County Master Gardeners envision "a healthier world through

environmental stewardship, particularly as it relates to the Chesapeake Bay." They carry out this vision through a variety of projects that offer exploration and inspiration. One example is the Anne Arundel County Master Gardeners Beekeeping Project at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis and Hancock's Resolution in

Pasadena where Master Gardener volunteer educators help plant, prune, weed, water, and discuss how to create safe and welcoming habitats for all pollinators by planting native plants and practicing sustainable gardening



Photo by [Jonathan Kemper](#) on [Unsplash](#)

techniques. Weather permitting, there may be an "observation hive," allowing visitors to watch honeybee activity without concern of being stung. Click [here](#) for a complete list of Master Gardener projects. #

Community Outreach

LWVAAC Seeks Case Method Project Coordinator

By Gail Viamonte

As I've shared in previous issues of *The Voter*, a partnership between the League of Women Voters of the U.S. (LWVUS) and the [Harvard Case Method Project](#) (HCMP) enables LWVAAC to send teachers to a no-cost professional development experience offered through the HCMP. This experience prepares teachers to appreciate, access, and deliver dynamic content and processes of civics education. Participating teachers are asked to demonstrate the method in Community Case Study presentations, such as the *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Struggle for Black Voting Rights* virtual event LWVAAC hosted on March 31, 2022. Since 2019, 115 League chapters in 33 states have engaged with the HCMP, with an anticipated hosting of 100 Community Case Discussions by the end of 2022.

We need a volunteer to help lead this initiative for our League. A timeline and step by step description of responsibilities may be found [here](#). LWVAAC's Case Method Project Coordinator plays a key role in bringing civics education and civil discourse to our schools and our community as part of LWVAAC's Collaborations and Partnerships leadership team.

Please consider volunteering to continue this transformative program. Email pres@lwvaacmd.org to express your interest and contact me with any questions at gviamonte@lwvmd.org. #



A Deeper Dive

Gun Safety: LWV and the Law

By Susan Cochran, Director and Action Co-Chair

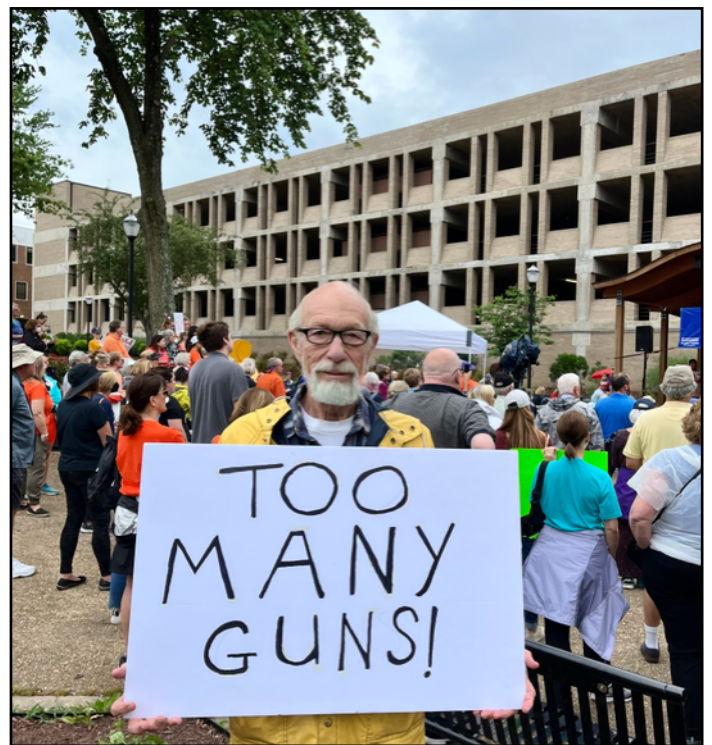
As the nation is reeling from a recent string of mass shootings stretching from New York to Texas to Oklahoma, and gun violence continues, many of us are asking what can be done about gun violence. The League of Women Voters has been working for sensible gun safety laws for over 30 years. LWVUS CEO, Virginia Case Solomon, decried the Uvalde tragedy and declared, "We will not be silent." The League's position on gun ownership is clear:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens.

The LWVUS supported legislation to extend the Assault Weapons Ban, which expired in September 2004. It also supported language to close the Gun Show Loophole to require all dealers to run criminal background checks at gun shows. However, these bills did not pass.

Maryland's gun laws are considered some of the strongest in the nation, according to the Gifford Law Center. To further reduce gun violence, Maryland has a Red Flag law, mobile crisis units, and has added money to its budget for behavioral health treatment. In 2013, with

LWVMD support, Maryland banned assault weapons, making it unlawful to transport an assault weapon into the state, or possess, sell, offer to sell, transfer, purchase, or receive an assault weapon. However, exceptions in the law prevent the confiscation of weapons from owners who possessed them when the law was passed.



Activist David Basil supports stronger gun control laws at the recent March for our Lives rally in Annapolis. (Photo by K. Larrabee)

There are additional Maryland laws concerning gun ownership in general. To buy a gun, one must be 21 years old, undergo a background check and wait 7 days after purchase to possess the gun. If the background check is not

[continued from p. 19]

completed in 7 days, the buyer must wait until it is. To carry a gun, there are more requirements. The Wear/Carry Handgun Permit requires a good and reasonable circumstance for needing a gun and no propensity for violence or instability. The Maryland State Police Secretary determines who passes this test. Also, 16 hours of training are required before the permit is issued.

Just this year on the state level, LWVMD (working with the LWVUS positions) supported two bills in the Maryland legislature—SB387 and companion bill HP425—to outlaw ghost guns. Ghost guns are homemade weapons that are untraceable, have no serial number, and are made from parts that often come in a kit or can be made on a special home printer. In Baltimore alone, 19 percent of the firearms recovered this year have been ghost guns. Baltimore City has filed a suit against Polymer80, a manufacturer of gun kits, accessories, and parts, accusing the company of creating a public health crisis. Ghost guns are now outlawed in Maryland.

Mass shootings, defined as a shooting of four or more people, have occurred in Maryland. But statistics show that there is less lethality in the shootings than in previous years, looking at the year 2019. From 2013 to 2019 there have been 67 mass shootings, with 61 deaths and 257 injuries.

State Senator and LWVAAC member Pam Beidle says that despite some of the strongest laws in the country, “We still have more work to do...we can’t do this alone.” She calls for federal gun safety laws, emphasizing, “We can’t keep guns from coming into the state.”

It is important to note that Maryland’s laws, especially the one banning assault weapons, are being challenged. Twenty-five states, led by Arizona and West Virginia, are urging the Supreme Court to hear the case, *Dominic Bianchi, et al. versus Brian E. Frosh, et al.* It was left standing by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and is now awaiting acceptance to be heard on appeal to the Supreme Court. #

In Memoriam

Carolyn (Carol) Wilson, a League member who resided at BayWoods of Annapolis, died in October 2021 following a brief illness. She joined LWVAAC in 2017 but was not new to the League. In 1980-81, she served as president of the Georgia League of Women Voters. An article written about her at the time described her as “vocal and almost vehement” on the subject of women’s rights and the ERA.



Photo by jerry klein on Unsplash

References

Earth Day Relived Resources

[Green Infrastructure Master Plan balances growth, conservation](#), Commentary by Matthew Johnston, *Capital Gazette* Feb 18, 2022
[ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND RESILIENCE FINANCING ASSESSMENT](#) 2018

[Funding Climate Change Adaptation: How Maryland is Paving the Way in Resiliency Financing](#) [paving-the-way-in-resiliency-financing](#), by Sarah Henshaw, March 10, 2021.

[Maryland counties confront climate change, costly projects](#), by Scott Dance, *Washington Post*, Nov. 6, 2021.

[Paying for climate change, Anne Arundel and Annapolis join forces to create 'resilience authority'](#) by Danielle Ohl. *Capital Gazette*, Apr 25, 2021.

[Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman, Councilmembers, Mayor Gavin Buckley address of Resilience Authority legislation](#), *The Business Monthly*, June 14, 2021

[Background on recent legislation to require MDE to use most current data](#)

[Anne Arundel County Nuisance Flood Plan](#), September 2020

Allyship Additional Reading

[Conversations are essential to affect change, but they're hard and uncomfortable, and you're bound to run into what's known as microaggressions.](#)

[Diverse and inclusive workplaces can be both difficult to find and hard to create. But if you care...you have the ability to effect real change—as an ally.](#)

[Five Steps to Become a Better Ally in the Workplace](#)

[How To Be An Ally: Your Journey from Curious to Courageous](#)

[How to Use Your Mouth, Nose, Eyes, Ears, Heart Hands to Partner Along Side Marginalized Groups.](#)

[The Second Wave of Cancel Culture: How the concept has evolved to mean different things to different people.](#)

[Why we can't stop fighting about cancel culture.](#)

Recycling Resources

Three Recycling Centers accept sorted glass, kitchen scraps and textiles.

Hours are Mon-Sat 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
410-222-6100

Live camera footage of traffic at each entrance is at [Know Before You Go](#).

Northern Recycling Center
100 Dover Road North East
Glen Burnie, MD 21060

Central Recycling Center
389 Burns Crossing Road
Severn, MD 21144

Southern Recycling Center
5400 Nutwell Sudley Road
Deale, MD 21751

[Information on composting](#)

[Information on Glass, Food Scraps and Textiles/clothing recycling](#)