



# 2023 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



P.O. Box 35, Arnold, MD 21012 \* [lwvaacmd.org](http://lwvaacmd.org) \* [lwvaacmd@gmail.com](mailto:lwvaacmd@gmail.com) \* 443-672-8270 \* FB@lwvaac



A Presentation by  
**Gerald Winegrad**

*Restoring the Chesapeake Bay:  
The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly*

---

Please join us:

Sunday, April 23 - 2:00 p.m.

Busch Library - 1410 West Street, Annapolis

[RSVP here](#)

Former Maryland Senator Gerald Winegrad has devoted himself to environmental causes for 53 years. His presentation will examine the results of 39 years of personal involvement in formal efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay.

Bay restoration is based on limiting nutrients and sediment that are causing dead zones and living resources to decline. Mr. Winegrad will pull no punches in revealing the inconvenient truths on the issues. Learn from this expert insider about the successes and failures toward these goals, and how we as individuals can take action to ensure a healthier Bay. This is an event you won't want to miss.

Mr. Winegrad is a life-long Marylander, environmental attorney, former state senator, member of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and a graduate school professor—teaching a course he wrote on Bay restoration.



**2023 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING & BRUNCH  
SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 2023  
AGENDA**

**11:00 a.m. Coffee and Conversation**

**11:15 a.m. Business Meeting**

Welcome	Alfa Stevens, President
Introductions & Vice President's Report	Alexis Dorsey, Vice President
Highlights of 2022 Annual Meeting	Joyce Martin, Secretary
Presentation of the 2023-24 Budget	Niecy Chambers, Treasurer
Adoption of Program Recommendation	Abby Root, Director
Report of the Nominating Committee	Niecy Chambers, Chair
Report of the Bylaws Committee	Kathy Larrabee, Chair
Update on LWVUS Transformation Plan	Niecy Chambers
General Directions to the Board	Members
Direction to LWVMD Convention Delegates	Members
Announcements	

**12:00 p.m. Brunch Buffet**

**12:45 p.m. Guest Speaker, Dr. Mark T. Bedell, AACPS Superintendent**

**1:30 p.m. Conclusion**

---

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Mark T. Bedell**

Dr. Mark T. Bedell began a four-year term as Superintendent of Anne Arundel County Public Schools on July 1, 2022, after successfully completing six years as Superintendent of Kansas City (Missouri) Public Schools. He will speak about his goals, civics education in the school district and the #BePresent Initiative.



---

**Cover: LWVAAC in the Community**

(Clockwise from top left) *Get to the Polls MD* Mall Walk (see Activities, Events, and Programs); testifying before County Council (see Action); voter registrar training (see Voter Services).

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

## 2023 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

### Meeting Workbook

#### Table of Contents

Vice President’s Letter, Alexis Dorsey .....	1
Highlights of 2022 Annual Meeting, Joyce Martin, Secretary.....	2
Report of the Nominating Committee, Niecy Chambers, Chair .....	3
Proposed Budget for FY 2023-24, Niecy Chambers, Treasurer .....	4
Program Recommendation, Abby Root, Program Planning Chair .....	5
Report of the Bylaws Committee, Kathy Larrabee, Chair .....	6
2022-23 Portfolio Reports	
Membership .....	8
Activities, Events and Programs .....	9
Voter Services .....	12
Action .....	15
Observer Corps .....	16
Community Outreach .....	17
Communications .....	18
Fundraising .....	21

#### **2023 Annual Meeting Committee:**

Niecy Chambers, Alexis Dorsey, Marguerite Duffy, Kathy Larrabee, Joyce Martin, and Abby Root

## VICE PRESIDENT'S LETTER, Alexis Dorsey

Dear Members,

Well! I survived! We survived!

In 2022, with some trepidation, I accepted the position of Vice President knowing I might need to “act” as President for the year. I have always thought of myself as a worker bee; not necessarily a CEO. But I knew I had a remarkable organization on which to rely. I'd like to express my gratitude for all the help I received. Thank you to those who kept me on track and on time with planning; to those who showed their support by attending events and making them a positive experience for me, and to those who shared their enthusiasm and ideas so I could benefit. I'd name names but then I would probably forget someone. You know who you are! Thanks for all you do!



The pages of this Annual Workbook will reveal our accomplishments for the 2022-2023 program year. The activities of the Action Team and the Voters Services Team deserve to be highlighted for they represent the major pillars of League work. Our Action Team partnered on a petition drive, consulted with County Council members, offered testimony at Council meetings, surveyed members regarding legislative priorities and conducted a productive Program Planning meeting.

The Voter Services Team worked overtime throughout the election year, taking in stride the late revisions to the 2022 election calendar. They consulted on candidate forums, conducted voter registrations, trained registrars, published Voters' Guides, and provided outreach to the community and other organizations. Collaboration with the Anne Arundel County Public Schools on voter registration and civic education has been fulfilling and inspiring.

In addition, we offered educational and social events to help strengthen our organizational capacity. We are justifiably proud!

As we head into a new program year, we will continue planning, discussing, advocating, and working to fulfill our mission to empower voters and defend democracy. My hope is that we will sponsor public events to further educate voters on local issues of importance to the League and impart our commitment to active participation in government. As you will see at our Annual Meeting and throughout this Workbook, Leaguers have a wealth of ideas to share.



## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2022 LWVAAC ANNUAL MEETING, Joyce Martin, Secretary**

Annual Meeting was attended by 29 members and the guest speaker, Andrea Mansfield.

Vice President Gail Viamonte called the meeting to order. She paid tribute to our President Alfa Stevens, who is on medical leave. She thanked the organizing committee and all who have worked to advance the League's mission throughout the year.

Joyce Martin presented the highlights of the 2021 Annual Meeting and recognized the contributions of "Forever" Secretary Carol Sures who stepped down from the role due to family obligations.

**Budget:** Members voted to approve the FY 2022-23 budget as presented.

**Program:** Members voted to readopt all LWVAAC public policy positions.

**Bylaws:** Committee chair, Niecy Chambers, explained that the first three (3) articles of all LWV bylaws must conform with the bylaws of the League of Women Voters (LWVUS). Because the national League added a definition of "student member" to Article III of its bylaws in 2020, LWVAAC needed to amend our bylaws to agree. Other proposed amendments included:

1. Changing the membership renewal date from June 30 to a rolling date based on the anniversary of joining the League or renewing one's membership;
2. More clearly defining Board directors' terms of office;
3. Adding a definition of the Executive Committee; and
4. Providing a broader authorization for conducting meetings virtually.

All remaining revisions simply clarified the meaning of the bylaws and/or corrected grammatical errors. Members voted to approve all proposed bylaws changes.

**Nominating Committee:** Chair Kathy Larrabee presented the proposed slate of Officers and Directors for 2022-24 and explained that the League elects half of the Board each year for a 2-year term. League bylaws establish the election process. The slate included:

<b>Alexis Dorsey</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Niecy Chambers</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Kathy Larrabee</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Vicki Jordan</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Amanda SubbaRao</b>	<b>Director</b>
<b>Jeri Schoenfeld</b>	<b>Nominating Committee (off-board)</b>

Members voted to adopt the slate of candidates for 2022-24.

**Speaker:** Niecy Chambers introduced Speaker Andrea Mansfield, Chair, Anne Arundel Charter Revision Commission.

**Post-speaker:** VP Viamonte thanked the members for their attendance and explained some of the volunteer opportunities available in LWVAAC.

**Directions to the Board:** Members shared ideas and sought support for the following ongoing and new efforts.

- Go to GAN (Growth Action Network) website to see information about zoning requests that might need member input at the meeting. Those recommendations go to the County Council.
- Need volunteers for petition drive on public campaign financing system.
- Need suggestions for field trips and activities.
- Meet with legislators.
- Organize small groups to look at county transportation or waste management. County Executive has an immigration advisory committee.
- Openarundel.org is a resource of things happening in the county.
- Annapolis City Council would welcome observers.
- Establish mentorship with young people.

---

## **REPORT OF THE 2022-23 NOMINATING COMMITTEE, Niecy Chambers, Chair; Carolyn Ciepiela and Jeri Schoenfeld**

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates for election:

### **Board Officers**

Amanda SubbaRao, President (2023-2025)

Joyce Martin, Secretary (2023-2025)

### **Board Directors**

Marguerite Duffy (2023-2025)

Vera Herath (2023-2025)

Abby Root (2023-2025)

Ashley Oleson (2023-2024 to fill unexpired term)

### **Nominating Committee (Off-Board)**

Jeri Schoenfeld (2023-2024)

**PROPOSED FY 2023-24 BUDGET**, Committee members Niecy Chambers,  
Treasurer, Abby Root, Jeri Schoenfeld, and Amanda SubbaRao

<b>OPERATING FUND</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>FY 22-23 Estimate</b>	<b>FY 22-23 YTD Actual to 4/15/23</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Actual</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Actual</b>
Beginning Acct Balance		\$9,046.79	\$9,046.79	\$8,626.72	\$7,510.43
<b>INCOME</b>					
Dues	\$7,095.00	\$6,805.00	\$5,225.00	\$6,105.00	\$5,980.00
Contributions	\$50.00	\$33.25	\$33.25	\$71.50	\$185.50
Annual Meeting	\$1,600.00	\$1,360.00	\$1,160.00	\$1,277.00	
Ed Fund passthrough					
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$8,745.00</b>	<b>\$8,198.25</b>	<b>\$6,418.25</b>	<b>\$7,453.50</b>	<b>\$6,165.50</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>					
<b>LWVUS PMP</b>	<b>\$3,328.00</b>	<b>\$3,216.00</b>	<b>\$3,216.00</b>	<b>\$2,832.00</b>	<b>\$2,512.00</b>
<b>LWVMD PMP</b>	<b>\$1,456.00</b>	<b>\$1,407.00</b>	<b>\$1,407.00</b>	<b>\$1,239.00</b>	<b>\$1,099.00</b>
<b>Meetings &amp; Events</b>					
Annual Membership Mtg	\$2,100.00	\$1,825.59	\$1,725.59	\$1,529.42	
Receptions w/Elected Officials	\$1,000.00	\$439.22	\$439.22	\$496.68	
Member/Guest Activities	\$350.00	\$85.05	\$60.05		\$120.00
Board (monthly & retreat)	\$400.00	\$155.30	\$155.30		\$222.60
Public Programs	\$300.00	\$175.00	\$0.00	\$66.00	
<b>Total Meetings &amp; Events</b>	<b>\$4,150.00</b>	<b>\$2,680.16</b>	<b>\$2,380.16</b>	<b>\$2,092.10</b>	<b>\$342.60</b>
<b>Community Outreach</b>					
Coalition Dues	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$200.00	\$50.00
Community Support	\$200.00	\$184.20	\$184.20		\$100.00
League Promotion (handouts, displays, publicity)	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00		\$100.00
<b>Total Community Outreach</b>	<b>\$650.00</b>	<b>\$634.20</b>	<b>\$334.20</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>	<b>\$250.00</b>
<b>Member &amp; Board Expenses</b>					
Registration fees	\$400.00	\$700.00	\$400.00	\$250.00	\$50.00
Member Directory (copies, supplies, postage)	\$250.00	\$206.23	\$206.23	\$160.30	\$147.70
Other print materials (handouts, bookmarks, etc.)	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$294.89
Misc. copies & supplies	\$75.00	\$57.05	\$12.05	\$37.00	\$113.40
Misc. postage	\$50.00	\$37.60	\$32.60	\$4.20	\$3.60
P.O. Box Rental	\$175.00	\$166.00	\$0.00	\$156.00	\$118.00
Communications Expense	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$37.08	
Advocacy Expense	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		
Miscellaneous Board Expense	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$94.00
Bank charges (net)	\$11.00	\$90.00	\$85.31	\$25.75	(\$10.98)
<b>Total Member &amp; Board Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,561.00</b>	<b>\$1,256.88</b>	<b>\$736.19</b>	<b>\$670.33</b>	<b>\$810.61</b>
Ed Fund passthrough					\$35.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$11,145.00</b>	<b>\$9,194.24</b>	<b>\$8,073.55</b>	<b>\$7,033.43</b>	<b>\$5,049.21</b>
<b>To/(From) Reserves</b>	<b>(\$2,400.00)</b>	<b>(\$995.99)</b>	<b>(\$1,655.30)</b>	<b>\$420.07</b>	<b>\$1,116.29</b>
<b>Ending Acct Balance</b>		<b>\$8,050.80</b>	<b>\$7,391.49</b>	<b>\$9,046.79</b>	<b>\$8,626.72</b>



<b>EDUCATION FUND</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>FY 22-23 Estimate</b>	<b>FY 22-23 YTD Actual to 4/15/23</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Actual</b>	<b>FY 20-21 Actual</b>
Beginning Acct. Balance		\$9,169.96	\$9,169.96	\$9,337.27	\$9,129.02
<b>INCOME</b>					
Annual Fundraiser	\$4,000.00	\$3,501.00	\$3,215.64	\$3,655.50	\$2,335.00
Miscellaneous Donations	\$1,500.00	\$1,100.00	\$1,043.79	\$1,487.84	\$1,590.00
Voters' Guide Study Grant		\$750.00	\$750.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$5,500.00</b>	<b>\$5,351.00</b>	<b>\$5,009.43</b>	<b>\$5,143.34</b>	<b>\$3,925.00</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>					
Candidate Forums	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	\$0.00
Voter Reg. & Education	\$750.00	\$315.79	\$315.79	\$66.78	\$300.00
Voter Guides & Vote411	\$3,000.00	\$4,178.27	\$4,178.27	\$4,288.87	\$2,971.75
Educ. Public Mtgs	\$500.00	\$0.00			\$200.00
Fundraising	\$500.00	\$587.64	\$587.64	\$205.00	\$170.00
Community Support	\$250.00	\$300.00	\$300.00		\$75.00
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$5,500.00</b>	<b>\$5,381.70</b>	<b>\$5,381.70</b>	<b>\$5,310.65</b>	<b>\$3,716.75</b>
<b>To/(From) Reserves</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$30.70)</b>	<b>(\$372.27)</b>	<b>(\$167.31)</b>	<b>\$208.25</b>
<b>Ending Account Balance</b>		<b>\$9,139.26</b>	<b>\$8,797.69</b>	<b>\$9,169.96</b>	<b>\$9,337.27</b>

<b>LWVAAC Roster</b>	<b>Member Type</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Dues</b>	<b>Per Member Payment (PMP) LWVUS/LWVMD</b>
As of 2/1/23	Individual	94	\$65.00	\$32/\$14
As of 2/1/23	Household	20	\$30.00	\$16/\$7
As of 2/1/23	Life	4	\$0.00	N/A
As of 2/1/23	Student	6	\$0.00	N/A
Projected FY 23-24	New	10	mixed	

## PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION, Abby Root, Program Planning Chair

Members met January 17, 2023, to review LWVAAC and LWVMD positions. Abby Root led the discussion and Alexis Dorsey served as recorder. There was consensus among members to readopt all [LWVAAC positions](#). No new local studies or updates were proposed.

After reviewing [LWVMD positions](#), LWVAAC members recommended an update, which will require a new study, to the Drunk Driving position to encompass other forms of impaired driving, including driving under the influence of legal drugs.

## REPORT OF THE BYLAWS COMMITTEE, Kathy Larrabee, Chair; Kathy Lottenbach and Carol Sures

The 2022-23 Bylaws Review Committee proposes the revisions explained below. Current bylaws may be found in the *2023 LWVAAC Member Directory* and on the LWVAAC [website](#).

Strikethrough indicates recommended deletions. Additions are shown in bold type.

LWVAAC Bylaws Article	Recommended Amendments	Rationale for Amendments
<b>Article IV Board of Directors</b>	<p>Section 1. <u>Selection, Qualifications and Terms.</u></p> <p>a. All directors shall be voting members of the League. Three (3) directors shall be elected by the general membership at each annual meeting. Elected directors shall take office <del>immediately</del> <b>on July 1</b> and serve for two (2) years or until their successors have been <del>elected or</del> appointed.</p> <p>b. At the first Board meeting following <del>the annual meeting,</del> <b>July 1, the start of a new fiscal year,</b> the elected Board members shall appoint additional directors not exceeding six (6) as they consider necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of the office of the appointed directors shall expire <del>at the conclusion of the next annual meeting</del> on June 30.</p>	<p>The LWVAAC budget operates on the fiscal year (July 1-June 30). The bylaws state the incoming and outgoing treasurers will serve together until June 30 and that all other newly elected Board members will begin office immediately following the annual meeting, which is held on a floating date anytime between April 1 and June 30. Setting a fixed date for a newly elected Board to begin has several benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The new Board begins with the new budget.</li> <li>2. Outgoing and incoming portfolio directors will have the benefit of a short transition period between the annual meeting and July 1.</li> <li>3. Outgoing portfolio directors will have full terms to complete work planned around the fiscal year budget.</li> </ol>
<b>Article V Officers</b>	<p>Section 2. Terms and Elections</p> <p>(4) Officers shall take office <del>immediately with the exception of the Treasurer;</del> <b>on July 1, but may begin transitions immediately following election at the annual meeting and serve in parallel with incumbent officers.</b></p> <p>(5) <b>The newly elected Treasurer and</b> the outgoing Treasurer shall <del>continue to serve</del> <b>together with the newly-</b></p>	<p>Rationale: Amended to complement Article IV recommended amendment on start date of July 1 for newly elected officers and directors, allowing all a transition period between annual meeting and the new fiscal year.</p>

	<p><del>elected Treasurer</del> until the League accounts and records have been duly transferred, <b>but</b> no later than June 30.</p>	
<p><b>Article VI Executive Committee</b></p>	<p>The purpose of the Executive Committee is to advise and support the President (or Co-Presidents). It shall be comprised of the elected officers and chaired by the President <b>or Vice President when officially serving in the absence of the President.</b></p>	<p>Rationale: The Vice President needs to have the full authority of the President when officially serving in the absence of the President.</p>
<p><b>Article VII Financial Management</b></p>	<p>Section 2. Dues. Dues shall be payable annually on the anniversary of the individual's enrollment. The Board may set reduced dues for students, associate and household members, and may provide scholarships for active members. A member who fails to pay dues within <del>three (3) months</del> <b>one (1) month</b> after they are due <del>date</del> shall be dropped from the membership roster.</p>	<p>Rationale: Members now pay dues 1 year from whatever date last renewed/joined; most now pay online (rather than via post) after our automated system reminds them to renew. This efficiency greatly simplifies our bookkeeping to collect dues, eliminating the need for a 3-month grace period.</p>
<p><b>Article VIII Meetings</b></p>	<p>Section 2. Annual Membership Meeting. An annual meeting of the members shall be held between April 1 and June 30, on a date to be determined by the Board. At the annual meeting, <b>a majority of members who are</b> present and voting shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Adopt a local program for the next year.</li> <li>(b) Elect officers, directors, and a member to the nominating committee.</li> <li>(c) <del>Determine the amount of dues members shall pay.</del> <b>Approve a budget for the next fiscal year's expenses and income, including the amount of membership dues.</b></li> <li><del>(d) Adopt a budget</del></li> <li><b>(d)</b> Transact other business that properly comes before them.</li> </ul>	<p>Rationale:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Previously a <i>majority vote</i> has been understood but not stated.</li> <li>2. Dues amounts have always been approved as part of the fiscal year budget and, therefore, have not been specifically mentioned. Sub-section (c) addresses the dues amounts specifically.</li> </ol>

## LWVAAC 2022-2023 PORTFOLIO REPORTS

### **MEMBERSHIP:** Kathy Larrabee and Niecy Chambers

The League of Women Voters U.S. (LWVUS) boasts more than 800 local Leagues nationwide, organized under 50 state Leagues. Local Leagues come in all flavors and sizes. In Maryland, the 15 local Leagues range from a veteran organization with more than 400 members to an Affiliate (also known as a Member-At-Large Unit) working with determination to grow and serve. The LWVAAC, with a current roster of about 120 members, is the third largest in the state.

**Member Engagement:** Anchored by experienced leaders and sufficient technical support, the LWVAAC has yet another advantage over other Maryland Leagues—its geographic proximity to LWVMD headquarters in Annapolis and to the Anne Arundel County and Maryland seats of government. This prime location multiplies the opportunities LWVAAC members have to interact with their elected representatives and to take advantage of in-person LWVMD-sponsored educational activities, including those related to the Maryland legislative session. Despite this advantage, member participation in League work has not kept pace with LWVAAC's growth in membership.

LWVAAC's membership has doubled since 2016, yet active participation remains low, with about 20 percent of our membership, including the Board members, attending various LWVAAC and LWVMD events. There are a variety of reasons, just as there are different motivations for joining the League. Every member strengthens the League's voice and member dues enable our actions. Still, from a leadership position, knowing how to turn members' knowledge and skills into volunteerism has been challenging.

Email continues to be the League's most efficient way to communicate with members about opportunities to participate in League activities—as volunteers and as audience. Leadership encourages members who have opted out of receiving email from the League to at least keep an eye on the LWVAAC and LWVMD websites and Facebook pages for information about League opportunities to learn and engage in League activities.

**LWVAAC Member Orientation:** The Membership Chair organized an in-person orientation and personally invited 30 recent members to attend. One responded and opted to receive a one-on-one briefing. The option for a private League orientation is available to all.

**Member Dues:** The portion of dues that LWVAAC pays to the state and national Leagues (also known as per-member-payment or PMP) remained the same this year, as did our League's annual dues. Life members (those who have been in the League for over 50 years) are exempt from both PMP and dues. Student members (those enrolled full- or part-time in an accredited

institution) are not charged PMP but Leagues may assess dues. LWVAAC has offered free student membership since 2018.

**New Membership Renewal Process:** LWVAAC instituted a new membership renewal process this past fiscal year. Now, members are automatically reminded via email through the League's online recordkeeping system (the NationBuilder platform) when their memberships are up for renewal. Reminders are emailed to each member prior to and on the one-year anniversary of whenever the member last paid dues. If no renewal is received, the member is then held in a temporary "grace period." When payment is made, the member receives an automatic acknowledgment. If payment is not received within the grace period, then the member becomes "inactive" on the League's roster. While this new renewal method makes a definitive headcount of members more challenging, it does simplify the process and it is fairer to all.

**2023 Member Directory:** A printed member directory with members' contact information, LWVAAC positions, and bylaws was printed as of January 31 and mailed to each member. To ensure up-to-date contact information between printings, members are encouraged to email changes to [membership@lwvaacmd.org](mailto:membership@lwvaacmd.org).

**Member Meetings:** Members are strongly encouraged to attend two important member meetings each year—a summer planning retreat and a spring annual membership meeting. Both are a bit social and a bit of important League business, and most certainly learning opportunities for participants.

## **ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, AND PROGRAMS**

### **Annual Retreat, Niecy Chambers**

Enjoying fresh air and a change of scenery, 15 League members gathered outdoors at Lake Waterford Park in Pasadena for LWVAAC's annual retreat on August 19, 2022. The light breeze seemed to fan our enthusiasm as we brainstormed projects and programs, we wanted the League to undertake in the coming year.

The primary purpose of the annual retreat is to sketch out our League's calendar of events and ensure we have members willing to coordinate and carry out the different activities. Board directors often kick off the discussion by describing their portfolios, including any recurring or planned programs, and listing opportunities for member involvement. At the 2022 retreat, Voter Service Co-Chair Vera Herath outlined the many services LWVAAC provides during an election year, such as registration drives, candidate forums, Voters' Guides, and public speaking requests, and emphasized our need to engage more members as volunteers. Retreat participants suggested practical solutions, including a group training for voter registrars, a website volunteer form and brief, topic-specific communications.

The election year also dominated our review of the Action and Advocacy portfolio. Co-Chair Abby Root reported on LWVMD's 10-year redistricting reform plan and LWVAAC's involvement in a petition drive to add a question on public campaign financing to the 2022 general election ballot. Retreat participants contributed their top concerns, urging League action on ranked choice voting, open primaries, and polarized politics.

Events Chair Marguerite Duffy, Membership Chair Kathy Larrabee and Harvard Case Method Project Coordinator Joyce Martin discussed the programs they hoped to offer in the coming year. Vice President Alexis Dorsey encouraged participation in the Observer Corps and asked retreat participants for their suggestions of activities.

A picnic lunch delivered to our pavilion by Panera midway through the retreat provided participants the opportunity to visit informally and rebuild strength for the lively discussions ahead. Special thanks to Alexis Dorsey and Kathy Larrabee for their contributions to this event.

#### **Mall Walks, Alexis Dorsey, Vice President**

Twice in October and once in February, LWVAAC members and friends gathered to stroll around Westfield Annapolis Mall. The events in October supported the LWVMD fundraising campaign dubbed "Get to the Polls Maryland," and encouraged voter participation in the general election. Celebrating the 103<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the League was the goal of the February walk, but these gatherings have a secondary purpose: promoting connections between members to strengthen our organization. The LWVAAC Board plans to continue these Mall Walks and looks forward to building friendships and community with our members.

#### **Enrichment Programs, Marguerite Duffy, Events Chair**

Since the 2022 annual meeting, LWVAAC has organized a virtual public informational program, and eight in-person gatherings, including a field trip, a holiday breakfast and charity drive, two book discussions followed by two lunch socials, and an in-person public presentation to be held April 23, 2023. The Communications Committee publicized the events on our website, via email, and on social media and public online event calendars.

- **Earth Day 2022:** Through the "magic" of Zoom, three speakers addressed LWVAAC's 2022 theme, *Environmental Challenges and Solutions in Anne Arundel County*. Matt Johnson, Anne Arundel County Environmental Policy Director, led off with "Climate Crisis: The Overarching Environmental Issue." Johnson detailed local trends and resiliency measures and concluded with a rousing call to action. Rich Bowen, AAC Recycling Program Manager, spoke on "Household Waste: Curbside to County." He called attention to county resources for recycling and the importance of "recycling right." Nancy Allred, Interim Master Gardener Coordinator for AAC, presented



“Community Solutions: Master Garden Outreach” in which she discussed the environmental need for native gardens and biodiversity. More than 70 people registered for the live-streamed presentation.

- **Field Trip:** Events Chair Marguerite Duffy organized a field trip to the Hancock’s Resolution Historic Farm Park in Pasadena, listed in the National Park Services’ National Register of Historic Places. Recommended by a member who lives in northern Anne Arundel County, Hancock’s Resolution offered an opportunity for League inclusivity as well as an enjoyable outdoor excursion on a fall day. On the guided tour, members learned four centuries of county history, including information about Native Americans, Captain John Smith, the War of 1812, and sustainable farming.
- **Books for Learning:** Timely reading selections and the opportunity to meet in person led to two successful member/guest book discussions, in October and March.
  1. *Let the People Pick the President: The Case for Abolishing the Electoral College*, by Jesse Wegman (meeting/lunch in Pasadena); and
  2. *The Other Wes Moore*, authored by Wes Moore, years before becoming Maryland’s Governor (meeting at the Busch Annapolis library, lunch at Paul’s Homewood Cafe).We followed both meetings with bring- or buy-your-own lunches, to provide members the chance to get better acquainted and share mutual civic issues of interest.
- **Holiday Breakfast:** Our second annual holiday breakfast and charity drive once again drew a festive and generous group of members to the Lighthouse Bistro on a Saturday morning in December. The Bistro is operated by the Light House, an Annapolis homeless prevention support center that also provides workforce support. LWVAAC’s charity drive raised over \$1,000 for the Light House.
- **Earth Day 2023:** Former State Senator Gerald Winegrad will present “Restoring the Chesapeake Bay: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” at 2 p.m. on April 23, in person at the Busch Annapolis Library. LWVAAC has conducted extensive public outreach.

### **Program Planning, Abby Root**

LWVAAC held its annual program planning meeting in January. 15 members gathered virtually on Zoom to consider whether our local League’s existing positions merited updating and to evaluate whether a new study should be undertaken to address a local issue. While no new studies were proposed, members expressed strong interest in examining LWVAAC’s long-held positions in light of current conditions in the county.

After reviewing LWVMD positions, LWVAAC members noted the need for an update of the Drunk Driving position to encompass other forms of impaired driving, especially in light of the recent legalization of recreational marijuana, supported by a state League position. Several other local Maryland Leagues joined LWVAAC in raising this concern in their program planning

submissions. As a result, the LWVMD Board has decided to recommend a statewide study to update the LWVMD position on Drunk Driving for consideration at the 2023 LWVMD Convention in June.

#### **County Council Meet & Greet, Alexis Dorsey, Vice President**

On Tuesday, February 21, the LWVAAC hosted a reception for the newly elected County Council at Picante Restaurant on West Street in Annapolis. Over delicious appetizers, members had the opportunity to speak individually with Councilman Pete Smith (District 1), Councilwoman Julie Hummer (District 4), Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler (District 5), Kristin Etzel (Legislative Assistant to Councilwoman Allison Pickard of District 2), and Stacey Fitzgerald (Legislative Assistant to Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien of District 6). The League invited each Council member to share with the group their priorities for their district and their vision for the County. Some topics of discussion were quality of life for families and children, community safety, supporting small businesses and job opportunities, environmental issues, and managing traffic. It was informative and enjoyable for all who attended.

#### **VOTER SERVICES, Vera Herath and Vicki Jordan, Co-chairs**

##### **Voter Services and Education, Vera Herath**

The gubernatorial election kept the Voter Services team very busy throughout 2022. The team responded to numerous requests for voter registration assistance, organized voter registrar certification training for LWVAAC and AAUW members, developed community partnerships and compiled and distributed the voters' guide.

After a productive and enjoyable experience registering voters during the Annapolis Pride Festival last June, LWVAAC was extremely pleased to receive an invitation to participate in the second annual Pride Festival on June 3, 2023. The Voter Services team has reserved a spot and intends to make this a regular voter service event.

In March and October 2022, at the behest of Anne Arundel County Public Schools, LWVAAC and NAACP-AAC organized, staffed and managed successful high school voter registration drives.

Last summer, Vera Herath met with representatives of most branches of the Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL) to discuss ways our organizations can work together to educate voters and reach more county residents, especially young people. LWVAAC seeks to enhance our excellent relationship with AACPL.

Thanks to her access as an authorized volunteer at the Ordinance Road Correctional Center (ORCC), Vicki Jordan provided voter registration and information to inmates on multiple occasions over the past year. With the support of the ORCC administration, she registered

dozens of voters, distributed and described how to use the Voters' Guides, explained inmates' voting rights, and emphasized the importance of voting.

LWVAAC's Voter Services team organized or participated in other community events, helping to register voters and provide information about voting and elections:

- Juneteenth, partnering with NAACP-AAC, 2022.
- Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis (HACA) Bloomsbury Square Community Resource Day, Annapolis, June 25, 2022
- Residents' meeting at The Gatherings, Odenton, June 28, 2022.
- U.S. Citizen and Immigration Service's Naturalization Ceremony at William Paca House, Annapolis, July 4, 2022.
- NAACP Family Day, July 30, 2022.
- National Night Out, August 2, 2022.
- Heritage Harbour community Candidate Meet-and-Greet, August 31, 2022.
- Presentation for a student service project on voting and elections, Discoveries at the Mall branch of AACPL, September 10, 2022.
- National Voter Registration Day (NVRD), Odenton Library and Arnold YMCA, September 19 and 20, 2022.
- Kunta Kinte Festival, Annapolis, September 24, 2022.
- Pantry Day at Woodside Gardens Apartments, Annapolis, October 3 and 17, 2022.
- 4th Annual Minority Money Matters, Anne Arundel Community College, with NAACP-AAC, February 25, 2023.
- MLK Parade and African Diaspora Festival, Annapolis, with NAACP-AAC, April 1, 2023.

### **Candidate Forums, Vicki Jordan**

At the invitation of the president of Heritage Harbour's Civic Association, Vicki Hutchins, the LWVAAC Voter Services team helped the association host a candidate forum according to League standards. As a co-sponsor of the event, LWVAAC took responsibility for inviting and communicating with the candidates, arranging the moderator, providing, and training volunteers and other assistance. The Civic Association more than held up their end, providing publicity, a videographer, volunteers, and logistical support, not to mention an ideal venue and large, attentive audience of Heritage Harbour residents. The successful forum, held August 29 and moderated by Mary Gunther, included candidates for County Executive and the 6<sup>th</sup> District County Council seat. That recorded meeting is on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/GfF3aW8xN98>.

Vicki assisted the Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce in their planning for a County Executive candidate forum, sharing LWV rules and forum procedures. Several LWVAAC members attended the forum on October 18.

The Voter Services team also participated in the planning and execution of the Affordable Housing Coalition's "Conversation with the Candidates," October 5. While the original intent was to hold a candidate forum, lack of participation by Republican candidates caused organizers to change the format. All seven Democratic candidates for County Council participated, along with the incumbent County Executive Steuart Pittman. The well-attended and well-received afternoon event took place at the Busch Annapolis Library.

#### **VOTE411.org and Voters' Guides, Niecy Chambers**

VOTE411.org refers both to the LWV-owned public website that offers voters customized election information and to the software application Leagues across the country use to gather candidate responses and create local voters' guides. LWVMD purchases the license for LWVAAC and other Maryland Leagues to use the VOTE411.org app to communicate with candidates, pose questions on public policy issues, post explanations of ballot measures, promote candidate forums, and publicize voting dates and requirements. Information is exported from VOTE411.org to create printable versions of the voters' guide.

Like the Anne Arundel County Voters' Guide for the 2022 Primary Election, the 2022 General Election Voters' Guide was printed on large format newsprint, with layout by a professional graphic designer. Through the Education Fund, LWVAAC paid to print 7,500 copies of the Primary Election Voters' Guide and 6,500 copies of the General Election guide. Print voters' guides were distributed through the county's public libraries and senior centers and other community outlets. In addition, 1,000 copies of both the Primary and General Election Voters' Guides were mailed to voters in one precinct of the county as part of a user study by LWVMD and Salisbury State University.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether reading a voters' guide improved voter turnout and/or whether voters with access to a guide were more likely to vote in local elections. After the election, questionnaires were sent to the same voters as well as to voters in a second precinct that did not get the guide. At this time, the results of the study are unknown. An LWVMD grant reimbursed LWVAAC for incurred expenses related to the study.

Following the General Election, LWVAAC sent a questionnaire to the 16 branches of the county library system asking about their experience distributing voters' guides. Of the 11 librarians who responded, all thanked LWVAAC for providing a valuable resource that patrons often request. Some reported running out of guides while others had an excess supply. This information will help LWVAAC in determining future print quantities and appropriately allocating donated funds.

## **ACTION, Abby Root and Susan Cochran, Co-chairs**

The Action team advocates by testifying on LWVAAC's behalf, writing letters to the editor, emailing Action Alerts on current legislative issues, and joining coalitions when our issues align. We educate the public on the pros and cons of an issue, explain why the League participates in advocacy for or against the issue, and encourage our members and the public to advocate on their own behalf.

This year LWVAAC testified before the County Council on proposed legislation, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Capital Gazette*, and joined a coalition.

### **The Fair Elections Maryland Coalition**

In February 2022, Abby Root testified before the County Council in favor of Resolution 1-22. The resolution would place a question on the November 2022 ballot to let voters decide whether or not to amend the County Charter to create an optional public campaign system for County Executive and County Council candidates. The resolution failed because it did not receive a super majority vote by the Council required for a County Charter amendment.

After the failure of the vote, the Fair Elections Maryland Coalition initiated a petition drive to get the resolution on the ballot. As a member of the coalition, LWVAAC worked to educate voters about the petition drive by writing a letter to the editor of the *Capital Gazette* and worked in earnest to get League members, family, and friends to sign the petition. The coalition collected over the required 10,000 signatures needed to get the Charter amendment on the ballot. However, after two weeks of signature verification by the Anne Arundel County Board of Elections (BOE), the BOE determined that more than half of the signatures were invalid, primarily because petition signers were not registered to vote, which is a legal requirement to participate.

LWVAAC and other coalition organizations will remain at the forefront of the effort to make a public campaign finance system available to candidates in Anne Arundel County running for County Executive and the County Council.

### **Testimony: Bill 6-23**

At the County Council Meeting on February 21, 2023, Abby Root testified in favor of Bill 6-23, a zoning ordinance that would permit accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in the county. An ADU is a second dwelling unit on an owner-occupied property of a certain size.

LWVAAC has a policy position supporting the creation of affordable housing to meet the housing needs of special populations and to increase housing opportunities for people of low or moderate income. The League believes ADUs are one way for the county to meet the challenge

of the rising costs of housing. ADUs could be more affordable for low- and moderately low-income residents. Such a unit, occupied by an older adult or disabled person, could allow them to remain in the community near family and friends. An ADU also could serve an empty nester or young adult just entering the workforce. Moreover, ADUs could provide additional housing options within a neighborhood without changing the character of the community.

County Council amended Bill 6-23 at its February 21 and March 6 meetings. Council members voted unanimously to pass the Bill 6-23 on April 3. County Executive Pittman supported the measure and is expected to sign the legislation.

### **Testimony: Bill 19-23**

At the April 3 County Council meeting, Abby Root testified in support of Bill 19-23, an ordinance that would ban plastic bags in the county.

LWVAAC's policy position on solid waste is to "support a program of solid waste management that protects public health and environment through promotions of source reduction, recycling, and adoption of a conservation ethic among individuals, businesses, and government." Root testified that plastic bags are detrimental to the health of humans, animals, and the planet, ending up as toxic waste in landfills, waterways, and Chesapeake Bay.

This bill will require retailers to charge a fee to the customer for any paper or reusable carry out bag provided at the point of purchase. The council voted to amend the legislation on April 3 and will consider the bill again at its April 17 meeting.

### **Legislative Day Reception**

Due to the renovation of the Department of Legislative Services building, LWVAAC was unable to meet with the Anne Arundel County delegation during this year's General Assembly session.

### **OBSERVER CORPS, Alexis Dorsey, Chair**

The Observer Corps (OC) is a committee of the LWVAAC that actively observes Anne Arundel County government to gain understanding, promote transparency and accountability, and identify issues of importance to voters. The OC continues to monitor the County Council, Planning Advisory Board, Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County, and Human Relations Commission. The OC has also observed meetings of the Board of Education, Board of Elections, and Police Accountability Board. During the year, members have learned about the process of reviewing the Capital Budget, the County Charter, Long Range Planning, and the need for Affordable Housing.



Last fall, the OC met with representatives of the Office of Planning and Zoning to share concerns related to Plan 2040, the updated General Development Plan, such as affordable housing, transportation, and environment. LWVAAC offered to help promote participation in the county survey which will produce more detailed Region Plans.

In February, we hosted a Meet & Greet for the newly elected County Council to encourage members to interact with their local representatives. (See report p. 11.)

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

### **LWVAAC Harvard Case Method Project, Joyce Martin, Coordinator**

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) has partnered with Harvard University's School of Business in facilitating the [Case Method Project](#), a national program that employs case method teaching to deepen students' understanding of American democracy. In 2021, LWVAAC joined the effort to promote the program within the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) working with Eve Case, Director of AACPS Social Studies Programs.

Each spring the LWVAAC Coordinator reaches out to Director Case for help in inviting AACPS high school teachers to apply for the program. Selected teachers attend the Harvard Workshop free of charge, receive educational materials, and earn professional development credits. In return, the LWVUS grant requires teachers to incorporate at least one case into their class curriculum and present a community forum at the end of the year in order to educate the public about the program.

In 2022, two AACPS teachers were chosen to attend the Harvard Workshop. LWVAAC will host a virtual presentation in June 2023 to provide these teachers an opportunity to publicly demonstrate the case method of teaching.

### **Regional History Day Contest, Cindy Barry**

Sponsored by Maryland Humanities, Maryland History Day challenges middle and high school students, working individually or in small groups, to create a project that requires critical thinking, research, analysis, writing, and public speaking skills. Each year, Anne Arundel County holds a Regional History Day contest in conjunction with the state initiative.

In 2023, LWVAAC sponsored a Community Special Award for the "Project Best Representing Women's History." This commendation is for a "project that focuses on an individual, event, or movement and while connecting to the annual theme proves why the impacts made are valuable to the culture, history, economics, or politics of the United States or world."

Cindy Barry volunteered to represent LWVAAC as a judge of the regional contest, held at Broadneck High School on February 8. This year's theme was *Frontiers in History—People, Places, Ideas*. Judges received training prior to the event and were placed in teams. Each team was assigned a category: documentary, paper, website, performance, or poster exhibit. Each category could nominate one project for a Special Award, in addition to or including the nominees for overall 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winners. The top two winners would go on to represent the region at state and national competitions.

All projects had to have annotated bibliographies of primary and secondary sources and show a broad range of sources. While judging, Cindy saw the students' enthusiasm for their topics, the way the student teams worked together, the variety of topics, the commitment, the creativity of presentation, and the depth of research and could easily infer the dedication of the teachers.

The 2023 Anne Arundel County Regional History Day Expo and Awards Ceremony took place March 7 at Broadneck High School. Cindy presented LWVAAC's Special Award for the "Project Best Representing Women's History" to Mioi Schoeder of Crofton High School. Mioi's project focused on Agnes Varda (1928-2019), who was a photographer, film director, Paris-based key figure in modern film history, and one of the world's leading filmmakers.

Regional History Day is an excellent community and educational endeavor and gives a visible and favorable profile to the League, especially in young people's eyes.

**COMMUNICATIONS**, Kathy Larrabee, Chair; Amanda SubbaRao, Niecy Chambers and Ashley Oleson

The LWVAAC Board established the Communications Committee several years ago to organize related talent and tools under one umbrella. This reorganization has minimized the mass communication challenges to Board directors, allowing each to concentrate on their areas of responsibility more fully. Moreover, this dedicated Committee has helped enhance LWVAAC's public image through more consistent messaging and branding. Our League attributes the unusually high number of new members who joined online this past year, without first contacting the League, to be proof of significant website improvements to showcase LWVAAC activities, resources, and connections with government and community.

This past year, the Communications Committee has advised on communication strategies for messaging and outreach, developed images for publicity campaigns, published articles that support key programs, edited League testimony on County Council legislation, and more. Important to planning is choosing the right tools to execute the task at hand. Communication tools include e-blast, the website, social media, the newsletter, and to a lesser degree media relations. For maximum exposure, several tools often work in concert, such as Facebook and

the website—one supporting the other. Facebook announces news and then a link to the website provides the details.

Publicity for LWVAAC events includes plans for both internal and external audiences, depending upon whether the event is a member-only affair or open to both members and the public. As an example, the Communications Committee engaged in a mass publicity campaign to promote the upcoming LWVAAC [Earth Day presentation](#) scheduled for April 23 in Annapolis. This event required a three-prong publicity plan, one to inform members, another to inform the general public, and a third to target environmental organizations, from alliances to foundations to riverkeepers, and more.

The collective experience of the Communications Committee is an important resource to the LWVAAC. **Amanda SubbaRao**'s technical knowledge and creativity to reorganize and enhance the LWVAAC website, has made it one of the best among the Maryland local Leagues. In fact, on occasion, Amanda has graciously assisted other local Maryland Leagues to improve their online presence. Most recently, **Ashley Oleson** joined the Communication team to become the principle LWVAAC Facebook administrator. Her extensive LWVMD management experience provides an insightful understanding of League purpose and practice to improve Facebook content and grow a following. Ashley also makes desktop design look easy as she whips together striking images for Facebook and other online media. **Niecy Chambers'** contributions to the committee are vast, including meticulous writing, editing, and proficiency in maintaining and using a statewide online League system for mass communication. This system enables the e-blasts you receive from LWVAAC. Niecy's computer skills complement Amanda's technical know-how. **Kathy Larrabee** relies on her public relations background to assist with messaging to targeted audiences and to capitalize on branding techniques for publicity campaigns. She also has been the resident LWVAAC photographer, documenting League events for many years. Niecy and Kathy work together to plan, layout, and publish the quarterly LWVAAC newsletter, *The Voter*.

#### **Website, Amanda SubbaRao**

We continue to work towards making the [LWVAAC website](#) a vibrant resource where you can find out what LWVAAC is doing, and how you can participate. The website coordinator has reorganized the website by adding several new pages to better highlight information and activities relevant to our League.

The [Know Your Government](#) tab offers useful links to local, state, and federal government information, as well as an opportunity to join the LWVAAC Observer Corps, a group that observes county government. The [Take Action](#) tab is an informative page dedicated to League public policy positions and offers links to Anne Arundel resources relevant to those specific positions. Also there, the Community Connections page highlights events sponsored by other

organizations that may offer LWVAAC members educational opportunities. The [Voter Toolkit](#) contains information on activities of the LWVAAC Voters Services team, such as voter registration events and opportunities for member volunteers to get involved and for people looking to register to vote. Also under the Voter Toolkit tab, check out the page that identifies election [misinformation and disinformation](#) and explains how to find trusted, reliable information sources. Internally, we continue to streamline the process for getting new and relevant information onto our website, including getting events/activities posted.

The LWVAAC website is a dynamic, evolving tool that connects us with each other, our community, and beyond.

#### **Facebook, Ashley Oleson**

Maintaining a strong social media presence on Facebook and growing the following has been a challenge for LWVAAC, partly because very few LWVAAC members support the page by viewing and sharing posts, critical to the multiplying effect on social media. But another way to help build a following is for LWVAAC to consistently post engaging content at least several times a week. Planning the postings takes much thought to ensure a good mix of League, county, and state news that relates to the League's mission and public policy positions. To help our League measure our improvements, Facebook offers several "insights" that measure the number of people reached daily and charts that reach from month to month for comparison. The LWVAAC website and other sites continue to provide good linkages to details on our posts. To date, the [LWVAAC Facebook](#) page is being followed by most Anne Arundel County council members and several state legislators. We currently have about 325 followers.

#### **THE VOTER Newsletter, Kathy Larrabee and Niecy Chambers**

*The Voter* is the LWVAAC's quarterly newsletter, published in September, December, March, and June each program year using desktop publishing software and mass-distributed to members and other interested parties via a link in an e-blast. All [issues of The Voter](#) are posted to the LWVAAC website for easy access. These back issues secondarily provide a historic record of LWVAAC activities year to year.

With the help of content providers, primarily Board members who oversee particular focus areas and guest contributors on occasion, the newsletter has evolved to a significant information source for members on LWVAAC business, practices, volunteer opportunities, and events, as well as LWVMD training and educational opportunities, and local community issues. Each issue of *The Voter* is approximately 20 pages in length, with a Calendar of Events and 5-6 sections for news from LWVAAC, LWVMD and County and/or Community news and insights.

Of particular concern to the League Board are the LWVAAC members who have opted out of receiving *The Voter* and other LWVAAC-specific communications. The Communications

Committee makes a concerted effort to send only pertinent and timely information and to manage the number of emails members receive. We employ the League's communication tools to provide the fundamental benefits of League membership: opportunities for members to learn, participate, contribute, and socialize. We encourage members who prefer not to receive LWVAAC emails to follow our [Facebook page](#) and make regular visits to the [LWVAAC website](#) to stay informed. It is also possible to opt into select email communications on our [website](#).

## **FUNDRAISING, Niecy Chambers, Kathy Larrabee and Vittoria Natale**

Preparations for our League's 2022-2023 annual Education Fund fundraising effort began in February with creative brainstorming to develop a theme and compelling message. Tying our drive to Women's History Month in March provided the perfect opportunity to feature LWVAAC members who are helping to make League history through their continued volunteerism and service to Anne Arundel County voters. Whether they have been LWV members for less than a year or more than 50, all exemplify LWVAAC's commitment to civics education and nonpartisan voter services.

Hoping to parlay increased awareness of the League's voter services following the 2022 elections into an expanded supporter base, the fundraising team undertook a slightly different solicitation process. First, they formulated a prospective donor list consisting of several hundred county residents who had received a print *Voters' Guide* or other LWVAAC voter services. Next, the team developed a more cost-effective, eco-friendly format for the fundraiser letter, making use of a single sheet of paper with a tear-off form, rather than printing a separate reply card. Volunteers hand-addressed more than two hundred envelopes to add a personal touch and Kathy took it one step further, finding the perfect "Thank You" stamp for our mailing. All told, volunteers stuffed and mailed 440 envelopes on the week of March 20. Supporters have responded quickly and generously to the letter, donating more than \$3,100 to the LWVAAC Education Fund as of April 10, 2023.

The fundraising team also placed a promotional ad for the Education Fund in the monthly newsletter of a large retirement community where the LWVAAC Voter Services team had helped to stage a candidates' forum during the general election. The business card-sized ad appeared in the April 2023 issue of the *Harbour Lights*, a printed publication that reaches the approximately 1,600 residents of Heritage Harbour.

The saying goes, "you have to spend money to make money." LWVAAC invested time, creativity, and additional funds into our fundraising effort this year, in hopes of engaging more people in support of the League. Even so, we remain forever grateful to our members for their unfailing, generous contributions of time and treasure.