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## CALENDAR

Friday, Feb. 28	LWVMA Board Meeting, 11a.m. - 2 p.m., LWVMA office
Saturday, March 1	LWVUS Program Planning Due
Sunday, March 2	Forum on Family Homelessness
Saturday, March 8	League Leaders' Lunch, 11a.m. - 3 p.m., Wellesley Unitarian Universalist Church
Monday, March 24	"Remember the Ladies: Women in U.S. History, Literature and Schooling", Omni Parker House, Boston, noon - 3 p.m.
Wednesday, March 26	LWVMA Day on the Hill, MA State House
Friday, March 28	LWVMA Board Meeting, 11a.m. - 2 p.m., LWVMA office
Monday, March 31	Deadline for Student Video Contest Entries
Friday, April 18	Deadline for LWVUS Agriculture Study
Saturday, May 10	LWVMA Council 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## EVENTS

### Come to the League Leaders' Lunch!

You've been saving the date for months, and the LWVMA League Leaders' Lunch is right around the corner. Register now for a great day.

**Saturday, March 8, 2014**  
**11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
**Wellesley Unitarian**  
**Universalist Church**  
**309 Washington St.**  
**Wellesley, MA 02481**

Highlights of this event include:



- Meet new LWVMA Executive Director Meryl Kessler
  - Panel discussion of how Leagues around the state govern themselves: traditional board, steering committee, co-president, no-president will all be represented.
  - Agriculture Study Update roundtable
  - Next steps in advocacy: updated bottle bill, gun safety, election reform and more
  - Campaign Finance Reform Update
- Nuts and bolts for maintaining and expanding Leagues
  - News from LWVMA and upcoming events

We welcome representation from every League; two is ideal but any number is welcome!

**Cost per person: \$20 (payable at the door) includes lunch.**

Click [here](#) to register or email [nkassabian@lwwma.org](mailto:nkassabian@lwwma.org) by Monday, **March 3**.

Please note: each registration includes a meal purchase. If you register but cannot attend, please email [Natalie](#) by March 6. We will request payment from anyone who cancels after March 6 to cover our meal commitment.

For a full agenda and directions, click [here](#).

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## Make the League's Voice Heard on Beacon Hill



"Advocacy: Beacon Hill and Beyond." That's what we'll be talking about at LWVMA's annual lobby day at the State House Wednesday, March 26. Same-day registration starts at 9:30 a.m. with the program from 10 a.m. to noon in the Gardner Auditorium. New this year is the chance to [pre-register](#) (see below).

State Auditor Suzanne Bump will outline her office's work overseeing the government and will offer suggestions on how Leagues can effectively approach executive branch agencies to deal with issues.

Sen. Eileen Donoghue of Lowell will talk about the effort in Lowell to allow 17-year-olds to vote in city elections and discuss ways Leagues can work in neighboring cities which don't have Leagues. She'll tell us what kinds of opportunities are available in cities such as Lowell and Lawrence and who to call if a local League wants to help.

And, of course, our legislative specialists will be describing the specific bills pending in the legislature to discuss with your Senators and Representatives after the program. A packet with all the information you will need will be emailed shortly before the lobby day. Personal visits from constituents are extremely important in getting legislation passed, so please bring as many people as you can to talk to your legislators.

This year we are offering you the chance to [pre-register](#) for Day on the Hill. Just click [here](#) to let us know you are coming. When you RSVP, the LWVMA office will notify your Senator and Representative that League members from their districts will stop by between noon and 1 p.m. so you don't have to make an appointment.

If you decide to come at the last minute and haven't pre-registered, you are more than welcome. The more people who attend, the louder our voice is on the Hill.

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## Plan Now for Council 2014



Susan Jeghelian,  
guest speaker

Council 2014, our one-day, statewide event for all members, will be held Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Framingham State University in Framingham, just off the Mass Pike between I-95 and I-495.

This Council's theme is "Civility and Politics: Challenge to Good Government." In this era of blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and talk radio, the lack of civil discourse is creeping into town and city politics. You may have seen the impact in your own town. This incivility is affecting whether people are willing to run for public offices and to serve on public boards and committees.

To help put our theme into perspective, our guest speaker is Susan M. Jeghelian, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC), a state institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston that functions as a neutral forum and state-level resource for public policy dispute resolution and collaborative governance.

LWVMA's Council, held in alternate years from our convention, is an opportunity for League members to come together to share experiences, explore the theme topic, learn what's happening around the state, and attend workshops to help you and your League be more effective.

All members of LWVMA are welcome and encouraged to attend Council, including local League members and Members-at-Large.

Watch for the call to Council with registration information coming in mid-March, and visit the Council page on our website [here](#) for more information.

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## Student Video Contest in Full Swing



Our first [Student Video Contest](#), "Dear Future Governor...." launched Feb. 1, and high school students around the state have until March 31 to submit a two-minute video about a problem or issue they think the next governor should tackle. The contest includes prizes of \$1,000, \$500 and \$250 for the top three videos.

We need League members to help get the word out! Check this [toolkit](#) for a flyer to distribute at your League's events, sample emails to your high school contacts, and sample press releases and letters to the editor your League can use. And if you would like to help judge the entries during April, please contact Meryl Kessler at [mkessler@lwvma.org](mailto:mkessler@lwvma.org).

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## Forum on Family Homelessness

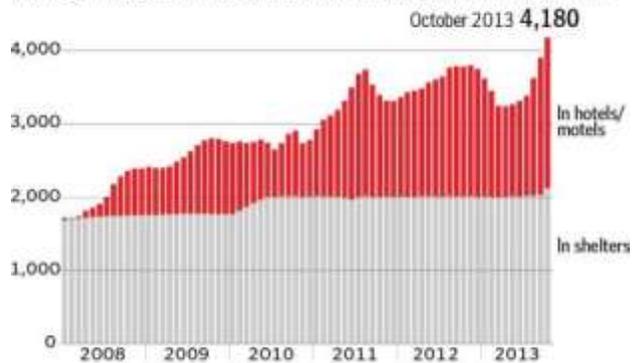
LWVMA is a co-sponsor of the tenth annual Forum on Family Homelessness to highlight the problem and explore solutions. The forum is Sunday, March 2, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Trinitarian Congregational Church, 54 Walden St., Concord. It is free and open to the public.

The keynote speaker is Aaron Gornstein, undersecretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development. Other speakers will be Kelly Turley, director of legislative advocacy, Mass Coalition for the Homeless, Sen. James Eldridge and Rep. Ken Gordon.

Sixteen homelessness prevention organizations will have information available on ways individuals and organizations can help deal with a record number of families in shelters and motels each night.

### HOMELESS FAMILIES

Average daily caseload reported monthly in Massachusetts



SOURCE: Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development

GLOBE STAFF

## Remembering the Ladies

Cokie Roberts, a contributor to National Public Radio's Morning Edition and political commentator for ABC News, will celebrate the contribution of women in American history as part of a forum sponsored by the Pioneer Institute, a public policy research organization. LWVMA is a co-sponsor of this exciting program.

"Remember the Ladies: Women in U.S. History, Literature and Schooling" will be held at the Omni Parker House in downtown Boston Monday, March 24, noon to 3p.m. The forum is free and open to the public, but reservations will be required. We will post information on reservations on our website as soon as it is available.

Roberts, author of two books, *Founding Mothers* and *Ladies of Liberty*, about women during the Colonial and Revolutionary eras, will discuss the role of women in American history.

The other keynote speaker is Valerie Boyd, biographer of the African-American writer, Zora Neale Hurston.

The keynote speakers will be followed by a panel of historians, academics and experts on K-12 education.

## ADVOCACY

### Election Reform Still Needs Your Support

After the Senate's almost unanimous vote in January for an election reform bill that would make Massachusetts a leader in greater access to voter registration and voting, the bill, [H.3788](#), is now in a joint conference committee to reconcile the Senate version and the weaker House version.

It would be particularly helpful if League members would contact [their own Senators and Representatives](#) and ask them to encourage the six members of the conference committee to keep these reforms in the final bill: Election Day registration, online voter registration, early voting that includes weekend hours, post-election audits, and pre-registration of 16- and 17-year-olds.



If your League is in a district represented by one of the conference committee members, please contact that Senator or Representative. The members of the conference committee are Senators Barry Finegold, Sal DiDomenico and Robert Hedlund, and Representatives James Murphy, Michael Moran and Paul Frost.

## Updated Bottle Bill: Next Steps

The original bill to update the bottle deposit law, H.2943, is still pending in the joint committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy. It has been joined by a bill, [H.3848](#), which is the initiative petition we collected all those signatures for. The only substantive difference between the two bills is H.2943 authorizes a review/change of the handling fee every four years, while H.3848 authorizes a review every five years. The handling fee is paid by bottlers and distributors to help cover retailers' costs of handling the containers.

The joint committee will be holding a hearing on the petition bill, H.3848, possibly in early March, and a good turnout in support of the updated bottle bill might encourage the legislature to pass the bill rather than let it go to the ballot in November. Keep an eye on our website for a hearing date.

Sen. Michael Moore has introduced [S.379](#), which would repeal the Bottle Bill and leave recycling up to individual municipalities. The Sierra Club has released a [report](#) analyzing and rebutting the claims of this repeal bill, which LWVMA opposes.

For more information, click [here](#).

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## OTHER

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### About the LWVUS Agriculture Study

We have posted a [toolkit](#) for the agriculture study on our website. It includes a particularly helpful guide that lists each consensus question followed by the relevant background documents that LWVUS developed which deal with that question topic.

Several Leagues are holding public [forums](#) on issues raised by the LWVUS agriculture study and they invite other interested League members to come.

LWV Andover/North Andover plans a forum Saturday, March 1, 2 to 4 p.m., at Andover Memorial Hall Library, 2 N. Main St., Andover. Three area farmers will speak: Lisa Colby of Colby Farm, Newburyport; Glenn Cook of Cider Hill Farm, Amesbury; and Rich Bonanno of Pleasant Valley Gardens, Methuen.

LWV Newton will present "The Politics of Food: You Are What You Eat" Wednesday, March 12, 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the John M. Barry Boys & Girls Club of Newton, 675 Watertown St. in Newton. Speakers are Steve Goodwin, Dean of the College of Natural Resources at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; and Greg Maslowe, farm manager, Newton Community Farm.

LWVUS notes that all [Agriculture Update](#) materials including the update papers, [Leaders Guide](#) and [online response form](#) are posted on the [LWVUS website](#) and Leagues are encouraged to meet and submit [consensus forms](#) by the deadline of April 18, 2014. Additional reference materials and guides provided by local Leagues can be found at the [Agriculture Forum](#). Contact Agriculture Update Chair [Norman Turrill](#) if there are more questions.

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### Thank You for Updating Your Membership Rosters!

Thanks to all the Leagues--nearly 100%-- that updated their rosters in the LWVUS database.

Congratulations to the following Massachusetts Leagues which increased the number of members this year, especially Westford with 13 new members, Needham with 10 new members, and Williamstown, Westwood/Walpole, and Lexington, each with nine new members. Other Leagues increasing their membership are Winchester, Weston, Greater Haverhill, Concord/Carlisle, Cape Ann Area, Waltham, Northampton Area, Medfield, Melrose, Martha's Vineyard and Marblehead.

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### Idea of the Month

Celebrate your League's birthday!

If your League has a significant anniversary of its founding -- one of those years ending in 0 or 5 -- coming

up, use the occasion to tell the people in your town what you do.

LWV Westford just celebrated its 45th anniversary and the Westford Patch ran a lengthy [article](#) on all the things the Westford League has done and has coming up.

LWV Amherst is celebrating a big anniversary, its 75th! Honoring that founding, the Amherst League has planned a series of events around the theme "Amherst: How a Small Town Makes Big Things Happen." Programs over the next two years will highlight groups, town committees and town departments that make Amherst work. To see more, [click here](#).

