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CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 26	LWVMA Day on the Hill, MA State House, 10 a.m. - noon
Friday, March 28	LWVMA Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Monday, March 31	National Committee on Voting Rights Hearing, Suffolk University Law School, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Monday, March 31	Deadline for Student Video Contest Entries
Friday, April 18	Deadline for LWVUS Agriculture Study
Saturday, May 10	LWVMA Council, Framingham State University, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

EVENTS

Join Us for Day on the Hill March 26

"Advocacy: Beacon Hill and Beyond." That's what we'll be talking about at LWVMA's annual lobby day at the State House on **Wednesday, March 26**. 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 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.

Our speakers are State Auditor Suzanne Bump with suggestions on how Leagues can effectively approach executive branch agencies and Sen. Eileen Donoghue of Lowell on ways Leagues can work in neighboring cities. 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.

All Members Are Invited to Council

The Call to Council went out to all members on March 14. Please encourage your members to attend, Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Framingham State University.

For full information visit the [Council webpage](#). Registration will be available in April. We're planning a great day.

Traditionally local Leagues are invited to make a donation to LWVMA at Council. Please consider a donation to LWVMA in your board deliberations prior to Council. Thank you!

National Committee on Voting Rights Hearing

The National Committee on Voting Rights will hold a hearing on voting issues in New England Monday, March 31, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Suffolk University Law School, 120 Tremont St., Boston. LWVMA is a supporter of this project.

The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice in Boston is organizing the event, in which volunteer commissioners will hear testimony on problems, successes and opportunities for reform in the election process throughout New England. The committee is seeking testimony from voting rights organizations, other organizations, and from individuals.

This hearing is free and open to the public. For more information, about the national effort, [click here](#). For more information about the New England hearing, [click here](#).

Leagues in several states, including Arizona, Michigan, South Carolina, Wisconsin and Minnesota, have participated in similar hearings, designed to gather information on voting issues in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's June decision on the Voting Rights Act.

League Leaders' Lunch Materials Available

The League Leaders' Lunch on March 8 in Wellesley was a great success. About 40 leaders from across the state attended.

If you were there, or if you missed it, you can check out the presentations and handouts on the [Local League Presidents Council Sharing Site](#). Scroll down to League Leader Lunch 8Mar2014.

See a slide show from the event on the LWVMA website by clicking [here](#).

Student Video Contest Deadline Approaching



New This Year! LWVMA invites Massachusetts high school students to submit two-minute videos alerting our next Governor about a pressing issue or concern. **Deadline is March 31.** This is a rare chance for teens to make their voices heard...and win cash prizes!

We need the help of League members to spread the word. Click [here](#) for more information about the Contest and to learn how you can help publicize it.

And if you can help judge the video entries during the month of April, contact Executive Director [Meryl Kessler](#).

You'll see the winning videos at the May 10 Council meeting.

ADVOCACY

The Updated Bottle Bill Hearing

It was standing-room-only at the joint committee hearing on the latest version of the Updated Bottle Bill March 6. Both pro and con speakers sought to sway the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy to act on H.3848, the text of the ballot question petition. If the legislature passes an updated bottle bill by May 4, the question will not have to go to the voters in November.

Rep. John Keenan, committee co-chair, noted he is retiring from the legislature and the bottle bill is among his unfinished business before he leaves office. He said repeatedly that ballot initiatives are not the way to get things done and he would like to see both sides reach a compromise so the bill could pass in the legislature.

Opponents of the bill, including representatives of the bottling and supermarket industries, were out in force and argued instead for the passage of S.379, Sen. Michael Moore's bill, which would repeal the entire bottle deposit program currently in place.

The proponents of the bill did a great job. [LWVMA co-president Anne Borg](#) described the work League members did in collecting signatures on the petitions, evidence of widespread support throughout the state for this bill. And she emphasized the League's opposition to Sen. Moore's bill. A League member now in her 80s who worked on the original bottle bill in the 1980s also testified.



Comedian Jimmy Tingle brought in a bag of unredeemable containers he had collected that morning on a median strip. He quoted a homeless person who said, "These containers wouldn't be here if they had a nickel deposit on them. Someone would have picked them up already."

A panel of seven legislators spoke, including Rep. Sarah Peake of Provincetown describing the unredeemed bottles littering Cape Cod beaches. The panel emphasized that 95 legislators have cosponsored this bill, highly unusual and evidence that we need to get this done.

Retired Rep. Alice Wolf came with Mayor Lisa Wong of Fitchburg, who noted elementary school kids in her city recently collected bottles and asked her why they can't redeem water bottles.

Janet Domenitz of MassPIRG, took up the challenge to work with the other side. She and Rep. Keenan agreed that the next "100 days was enough time to work out a potential solution for a bill."

Give Election Reform a Push



The conference committee reconciling the House and Senate versions of the election reform bills needs to hear there is widespread support for the reforms in the Senate version, including Election Day registration, post-election audits, early voting with night or weekend hours, online voter registration and pre-registration of teens. The committee's version will be the final bill; it cannot be changed on the legislature floor.

The time to push for these reforms is now. Please contact your Senators and Representatives again and emphasize the need to bring these election reforms to Massachusetts. Ask your legislators to talk to the conference committee members about these reforms. And if your legislator is on the conference committee, it is particularly important to contact him. The committee is made up of Senators Barry Finegold, Sal DiDomenico and Robert Hedlund, and Representatives James Murphy, Michael Moran and Shawn Dooley.

While you are talking to your legislator or drafting an email, it would also help to emphasize your support of the Massachusetts Disclose Act to bring greater transparency to campaign finance contributions. That's S.321/H.651.

You can find your legislators [here](#).

THE TO-DO LIST

A New Member Resources Spot at LWVUS

Ever had trouble finding membership-related materials on the LWVUS website?

The national League recognized that the lww.org website was not really designed for members, more for the general public, and in response has created a "Member Resources" website designed especially for local League leaders.

Please visit the site. It is well-organized and contains a lot of the information you have been seeking. The best way to get there is to go to lww.org and click on "Members" in the upper right-hand corner. You can also go directly there by clicking [here](#). You can sign up for forums, check out the resources, find convention materials, link to the studies clearinghouse, and more.

Spring Means High School Voter Registration

It's not too early to contact high schools in your area and arrange to register students to vote.

Local Leagues have run high school voter registrations in a number of ways, including a table at cap-and-gown pickup or on senior assembly day, bagels during an extended homeroom period, or just a table outside the cafeteria during lunchtime.



LWVUS offers a guide to high school voter registration [here](#).

Please tell us how many students you register and in which schools, so we can publicize the League's success in this area. Send your League's information to [Nancy Brumback](#).

LWVUS Convention Delegate Slots

How many delegates can your League send to the national convention June 6-10 in Dallas? LWVUS has increased the number for Leagues this year. Leagues with 1-49 members can send one delegate, with 50-99 members, two delegates, and with 100-149 members, three delegates. For each additional 50 voting members, a local League gets an additional delegate.

If your League does not plan to send your full allotment of delegates to the convention, there are other Massachusetts League members who would like to use those slots to attend. If your League has extra slots that it is willing to make available, please send an email to lwwma@lwwma.org. And thank you.

And Still More

Good-bye to Natalie

Natalie Kassabian, LWVMA's program and administrative coordinator and the cheerful person who answered all your questions, has moved on to a new job in the software industry.



Natalie did a wonderful job for us, and we will all miss her. We wish her the best as she moves on.

And we are looking now for an Administrative and Program Associate to fill that job. Please take a look at the job description [here](#) and pass the information along to anyone who might be interested.

The Latest Scharfman Grant Winners

Congratulations to the four Leagues awarded Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grants in February: Amherst, Cape Cod Area, Needham and Westwood-Walpole. The deadline for the next funding cycle is June 2. For information on the grant program [click here](#).

The grant program offers funds to help Leagues carry out events and projects in citizen education and voter service. Generous contributions to the Lotte E. Scharfman Education Fund have made this successful grant program possible.

The February grant recipients and their projects are:

LWV Amherst: Reaching out to the community through Facebook: This grant provides a stipend to a student from Mount Holyoke College for developing and maintaining a Facebook page for the Amherst LWV and other activities. Amherst is a large and active local league that carries out a variety of citizen education and voter service events and activities throughout the year. The Facebook page will help make these services visible to the greatest number of community members possible.

LWV Cape Cod Area: Citizen Education Forum: "Our Community Challenge: Mental Health Parity" The Affordable Care Act requires that benefits for mental health services must be on a par with those for physical health services. How is the Cape Cod community doing?

LWV Needham: Civics Bee: The first Needham Civics Bee was held March 2, a fun, community-building event to encourage knowledge of government and increase civic engagement.

LWV Westwood-Walpole: Candidates' Night: Candidates' Night in Walpole is held two weeks prior to the annual town election. All town-wide candidates are invited to participate, as well as all Representative Town Meeting candidates.

League Mother's Day Card

Look for information soon on a Mother's Day card that also benefits LWVMA. For a \$25 donation, LWVMA will send a card to a special woman, wishing her a Happy Mother's Day and letting her know that a donation to the League has been made in her name. This is a great opportunity for League members to recognize significant women in their lives.



Idea of the Month



Salute your long-term members!

As many Leagues head toward their Annual Meetings and other spring events, it may be time to honor a new 50-year member. Certificates that are signed by League president Elisabeth MacNamara and come in a folder ready to present to your honoree are available on request.

Use the "Contact" feature at the top right of the lwv.org website home page [here](#).

The League Leader Update is distributed to local League board members and LWVMA leaders. Anyone can request the Update by clicking [here](#). Please review this Update for

articles of interest to your League and include them in your local Bulletin.