



The Mass. League Voter

A newsletter for members of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts

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CALENDAR

Friday, Oct. 24	LWVMA and LESF Joint Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, Wellesley, MA from 10:45 a.m. until 2 p.m.
Tuesday, Nov. 4	2014 State Election
Friday, Nov. 7	New England Women's Policy Conference, UMass Boston, 10 a.m. -5 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 21	LWVMA Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, Wellesley, MA from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.
Friday, Dec. 19	LWVMA and LESF Joint Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, Wellesley, MA from 10:45 a.m. until 2 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 28	"Politics of Economic Inequality" forum, Bentley University, Waltham, MA from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

A Word From Our Co-Presidents

We've been busy... Here are some highlights:

- LWVMA's Voters' Guide for statewide offices has been updated for the Nov. 4 election, and is on our [website](#)- it is easy to use and includes responses from all candidates for statewide office.
- We are looking forward to some exciting programs this fall and winter; one program that is sure to provoke thought and conversation is the planned panel forum on economic inequality scheduled for January 28.
- Our Fall Appeal and Phonathon are our biggest fundraisers each year. Your donations enable both LWVMA and the Scharfman Citizen Education Fund to fulfill our mission to provide high quality voter education and citizen engagement programs. We are counting on your help!
- Our Nominating Committee is working hard, please see the article with their contact information. We hope that you will consider joining the 2015-2017 board - it is a fun and rewarding way to make a difference!



We want to acknowledge and thank all of the local Leagues that have held candidates' and/or ballot question forums, published voters' guides and/or letters to the editor and registered voters during the busy election season. Your hands-on work in your community provides so many opportunities for voters to learn about candidates and issues, and to participate in our democratic process. This is League work at its best!

Our best always,

Marilyn Anne

HAPPENING NOW

Hello. It's almost time!



The Fall Appeal drive will end on Friday, Oct. 24, and we'd like to thank our early donors for their generous contributions. If you'd still like to donate and earn 10-15% back for your local League, it's not too late. Please [click here for a form](#) to mail in with your check or [click here to donate by credit card](#).

But the appeal is not quite finished! Our win-win partnership* continues with the *Phonathon*, a fun way to catch up with fellow Leaguers and let them know what is happening in your local community and about our statewide initiatives. Please volunteer with your local League to make calls and enjoy the conversation if a League member calls you.

LWVMA demonstrates - on a daily basis - our consistent commitment to lobbying, taking action and speaking out. We're expanding our reach by joining with other non-partisan and like-minded groups on statewide ballot questions, and we continue to press on issues of *transparency in campaign finance, safe access to reproductive health facilities and concerns about our transportation infrastructure*.

In addition, the Citizen Education Fund (LESF) is informing voters and reaching out to more diverse groups. The 2014 Online Voters' Guide has been a tremendous success in bringing

thousands of viewers to our website and informing uncertain voters. Our Spring 2014 Student Video Contest was so exciting and well-received that schools are wondering when the next one starts. Who knew we'd uncover such a depth of artistry and hunger for creative political expression by our high school students?

With your financial support we will continue to deliver on making democracy work for all of us.

Thank you.

* During the *Phonathon*, a local League will receive 10% of the contributions earned from its telephone solicitations. It's a win-win for both your League and the state League. And this year, as a convenience for our donors, we've added the option of online monthly donations.

Spread the Word about our Voters' Guide

Our new online voters' guide for the Nov. 4 election is up on the [state League website](#). Think of it as a virtual candidates' forum!

Once again we had 100% participation from the 21 candidates for the six statewide offices--governor, Lt. governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer and auditor. Our pre-primary election guide got over 6,500 hits just on the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday (Election Day) of the primary. The Boston Globe is including a reference to the guide when it runs its voter information feature, and the Gatehouse chain of local newspapers features it on its [political website](#).



Let your friends and interested organizations know this valuable resource is available.

Can You Help Protect the Voters?

- April 2012, Southbridge: Latino voters challenged without cause during a special election.
- September 2012, New Bedford: "Show ID to Vote" volunteers falsely instruct voters to "show ID to vote" even though ID is not required for most Massachusetts voters.
- November 2012, Springfield: The Department of Justice investigates allegations of voter suppression.

Voter suppression doesn't just happen elsewhere, it happened in Massachusetts in the 2012 election.

LWVMA is working with the ACLU, Common Cause and MassVote to assure that all eligible voters can vote on Nov. 4. Volunteer poll monitors will be in precincts in Boston, Springfield, Worcester, Lawrence, New Bedford and Lowell that have experienced problems in the past.

If you would like to take a shift doing this important work, please register through the [MassVote signup](#) or the [Common Cause signup](#). You will receive information on locations that need coverage. The required training for poll observers will be held Monday, Oct. 27, at 6 p.m. at the Common Cause office in Boston; Tuesday, Oct. 28, in a webinar at noon; Wednesday, Oct. 29, at 6 p.m. at the ACLU office in Springfield; and Thursday, Oct. 30, in

a webinar at 5:30 p.m.

Take Action on Question 2

We are down to the wire to get the updated Bottle Bill passed Nov. 4. Any action you can take will help to assure the vote is YES on Question 2. The campaign needs us to make phone calls, canvass voters, host a yard sign, hold a sign on election day, or just "sign" an on-line petition in support. To sign up with the Yes On 2 campaign, click [here](#). See the recent LWVMA Action Alert for detailed information [here](#). You can see the new television ad the Yes on 2 campaign is running [here](#).



Thanks to our many members who have helped this campaign and remember to VOTE YES ON 2 on November 4.

LWVMA Positions on Ballot Questions

Four ballot questions will be on the statewide ballot Nov. 4. The Massachusetts League has positions on three of them. For detailed information on the questions and our reasons for taking these positions, [click here](#).

- Question 1: Eliminating Gas Tax Indexing-NO
- Question 2: Expanding the Beverage Container Deposit Law-YES
- Question 3: Expanding Prohibitions on Gaming-YES
- Question 4: Earned Sick Time for Employees-No position

EVENTS

LWVMA Plans January Forum on Inequality

Please mark your calendars for a panel discussion on the "Politics of Economic Inequality," co-sponsored by LWVMA and Bentley University's Valente Center for the Arts and Sciences on Wednesday, January 28, 2015, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Bentley University in Waltham.

This forum, which will be open to the general public, is designed to explore the relationship between growing economic inequality and political power in the United States. Our speakers will examine the question of what rising economic inequality means for political and civic participation-not only for the current generation, but for future generations as well. More details will be coming soon.

League Delegation Attending New England Women's Conference



LWVMA is participating as a Collaborating Partner in "The Unfinished Agenda: New England Women's Policy Conference," a conference sponsored by the UMass Boston Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy Library on November 7.

The theme of the conference is "Ensuring Economic Security for All Women and Their Families," and the

conference's goal is to develop a policy framework to coordinate the efforts of all those actively working to increase the economic security of women and their families. The conference will bring together leaders from the six New England states and from diverse organizations. We will be sending a delegation composed of LWVMA board members and legislative specialists, as well as Scharfman Fund trustees, to represent LWVMA. Information about the conference's findings will appear in the next Mass. League Voter.

Thinking about Convention

The next LWVMA Convention will be **Friday and Saturday, May 15-16, 2015**. The convention planning committee is working on the venue, the speakers, and events. If you would like to help with the planning or have any suggestions, please email [Karen Price](#). The committee work will be primarily through teleconferences.

And remember, your League will be part of the program planning process over the next two or three months, a process that will set the LWVMA agenda for the coming two years. We will be asking Leagues to indicate their preferences for 2015-2017 action priorities, action items and new studies soon. If you have suggestions in these areas, let your League leadership know. Our current action priorities are improving elections, the environment, and civic education and engagement, very broad categories. Action items are specific projects to tackle. The third area is proposed studies, restudies or concurrences you would like to see the League undertake.

LEAGUE ACTION

From Your Nominating Committee

We encourage you to nominate a talented and committed local League leader to serve on LWVMA Board of Directors and/or the LWVMA Nominating Committee.

Our future as a preeminent organization dedicated to voter education, civic engagement and ensuring that democracy works depends on our ability to persuade League members to take on new roles at the state level.

As we approach the 2016 election season, consider the leadership that we will need for the next League term, and please respond to the call for nominations as we work to develop a 2015-2017 slate of officers, directors, and nominating committee members on which delegates will vote at the next convention.

The Nominating Committee: [Shelia Martin](#), Chair; [Lee Bona](#); [Cynthia Brubaker](#); [Jean Cherdack](#); and [Andrea Kozinetz](#)

Make a Difference on Beacon Hill as a Legislative Team Member

If there's a subject you feel passionate about and want to be kept up to date on bills in that area when the new legislative session starts in January, our legislative specialists are looking for you.

Each specialist would like to develop a list of League members who want more frequent information than action alerts on bills, might be interested in attending public hearings on those bills or writing to legislators, or just want to follow certain pieces of legislation more closely.

Below is a list of our legislative specialists and the areas they cover. If you would like to receive information on the bills they are following and how you can help, please send your name, email address and phone number to specialists@lwmma.org, with the specialist's name in the subject line.

The legislative specialists are: Carole Pelchat, legislative director and following human trafficking; Clare Gordon, affordable housing and meeting basic human needs; Louise Haldeman, agriculture and casinos; Terry Yoffie, education and finance; Pat Costello, elder affairs; Linda Freedman, elections and voting; Launa Zimmaro, environment and carbon tax; June Michaels, fiscal policy; Carolyn Lee, good governance; Judy Deutsch, health care; Lynn Wolbarst, environment and public health; Robin Roberge, transportation; Susan Abbott, water resources; and Cindy Nock, women's issues.

A Look at Money in Politics

While campaign ads are still flooding your television, here's an interesting summary of how we got to this point in [a video from the New York Times](#). Key quote: "We can do legally everything Nixon had to do illegally." Take a look and share with your friends to raise awareness of the money in politics problem.

The Mass. League Voter is distributed to all LWVMA members. Anyone can request the Voter by clicking [here](#). Please review this Update for articles of interest to your League and include them in your local Bulletin.

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