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CALENDAR

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| Wednesday, Jan. 21 | LWVUS Webinar on League program process, from 3 p.m. until 4 p.m. |
| Friday, Jan. 23 | LWVMA Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, Wellesley, MA from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. |
| Wednesday, Jan. 28 | "Economic Inequality and Political Participation -- Whose Voice Is Heard?" Bentley University, 174 Forest Street, Adamian Academic Center 165 (Wilder Pavilion), Waltham, MA from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. |

Saturday, March 7	League Leader Lunch, VFW Hall, Norwood, MA
Tuesday, April 28	Day on the Hill, the State House, Boston
Friday, May 15 - Saturday, May 16	LWVMA 2015 Convention, Clarion Hotel, West Springfield, MA

HAPPENING NOW

LWVMA and Bentley Co-Sponsor Panel on Inequality and Participation Jan. 28

Please join us for a panel discussion on "Economic Inequality and Political Participation - Whose Voice Is Heard?" co-sponsored by LWVMA and Bentley University's Valente Center for the Arts and Sciences on Wednesday, January 28, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Bentley University, 175 Forest St., Waltham, in Bentley's Wilder Pavilion (Adamian Academic Center 165).

The panel of experts will explore the phenomenon of rising economic inequality and its effects on political participation: Is economic inequality having a discernible impact on who is participating, how they're participating, which groups are influencing policy, and what those policies are?

The panelists are Noah Berger, Executive Director, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center; Hahrie Han, Associate Professor of Political Science, Wellesley College; and Kay Schlozman, J. Joseph Moakley Professor of Political Science, Boston College. Juliet Gainsborough, Associate Professor of Political Science and Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences at Bentley, will moderate, and Bentley President Gloria Larson will help introduce the event.

This forum is free and open to the public, but we are asking LWVMA members and their guests to pre-register to ensure sufficient seating. Consider inviting students from your high school to attend the forum with you.

Please click [here](#) to let us know you're coming. And click [here](#) to download an event flyer. Further information can be found on our [website](#).

Lights! Camera! Take Action! Our Second Annual Student Video Contest Kicks off Feb. 1

Interested in getting involved with a high school program sponsored by the League? You and your members can be part of a fun and exciting initiative to boost youth civic awareness!

LWVMA is proud to announce that its second annual student video contest will kick off on February 1. The theme of this year's contest is, "There Oughta Be Law!"



What is the Student Video Contest? A new two-year session of the Massachusetts state legislature just opened in January. LWVMA is inviting Massachusetts high school students to submit two-minute videos letting our state legislators know what new laws should be passed to keep Massachusetts a great state. We want to hear student ideas about education, the environment, crime--you name it!

Who can enter? The contest is open to any Massachusetts high school student in grades 9-12.

When is the contest? Entries may be submitted online at lwvma.org starting Feb. 1. The deadline for submissions is March 31. Judging will take place in April, and winners will be announced in May.

Are there prizes? Yes! First place wins \$1000; second place wins \$500; and third place wins \$250.

What can you and your members do? We need League volunteers to help publicize the contest at local high schools and community centers. We also need judges and sponsors. Click [here](#) to download and print a flyer. Click [here](#) to see the whole video contest toolkit containing resources and ways for local Leagues to get involved.

Questions? Call 617-523-2999 or [email us](#).

Next League Leader Lunch Saturday, March 7

The next League Leaders' Lunch will be Saturday, March 7, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the VFW Hall in Norwood (193 Dean St). Save the date and look for registration information later.

We would again like to focus on two or three areas such as: simple ways to raise money for your League, League basics (including by-laws, Annual Meetings, communications), making the most of your board meetings, and new members events.

If you have a fundraising event that you could share with other leaders, or anything that you think might benefit other Leagues, please email [Karen Price](#). Evaluations always reveal that League leaders love sharing their successes, and many leaders come away with great ideas to bring back to their local Leagues. Any and all

suggestions for a successful lunch program are welcome.

ADVOCACY

New Legislative Session Begins

Members of the 189th General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were sworn in January 7, beginning the two-year session of the state legislature that will end July 31, 2016.

Legislators are currently drafting bills and recruiting co-sponsors for those bills. Over 6,000 bills are expected to be introduced formally on "bill drop day" in mid-February. Many of them will be virtually the same as bills which were not passed in the last session of the legislature.

Our legislative specialists on the Legislative Action Committee (LAC) are busy going over the bills that are likely to be submitted and deciding which ones in their areas of expertise should get formal League support (or opposition). If you and your League are particularly interested in a specific bill, please let the appropriate specialist know. You can see the list of specialists and their areas on our website [here](#) and contact them [by email](#) (put the specialist name or area in the subject line if possible).

The specialists will present the bills they think the League should follow to the LAC, which will then make recommendations to the board on those bills.

If there's a subject you or one of your members is passionate about and you want to be kept up to date on bills in that area, 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. [Get in touch with them](#).

Plan to Attend Day on the Hill

Please recruit your members to attend LWVMA's annual lobbying day on Beacon Hill: Tuesday, April 28, from 10 a.m. to noon at the State House.

Day on the Hill is later than usual, not to avoid another snow cancellation, but because the Legislative Action Committee needs time to review all the bills that are being introduced and to recommend to the board which bills LWVMA should support.



Nothing impresses legislators more than a personal visit from a constituent, so your presence at Day on the Hill and a visit to your Senator and Representative will greatly help promote the League's agenda in the new session.

New Advocacy Handout Available

A one-page handout outlining the LWVMA 2015 Legislative and Advocacy Agenda, the broad areas on which we will be focusing, is available to download and print [here](#). This sheet describes the areas the League typically works in and is perfect for distributing at your events and to prospective members.

AROUND THE LEAGUE

League Connections: Linking LWVMA with local Leagues



The LWVMA board is pleased to announce a new program to make it easier to bring representatives from the state League to local Leagues. LWVMA board and committee members are available to meet with your Leagues to present and discuss a variety of topics. Some suggestions are listed below. To request a board speaker on a topic, please contact [Brynne Gorman](#) in the LWVMA office. If you have a specific

date or other requirements, please let her know.

The topic does not have to be on this list. And, we do not need a packed hall for many of these topics. A board meeting, subcommittee meeting, new member orientation, a short presentation at a membership meeting, or a more substantial presentation at a community meeting are all possibilities.

This new program to connect more with local Leagues was developed by the Membership and Local League Services Committee and endorsed by the LWVMA board. We want to be flexible to your needs; do not hesitate to ask!

League Connections Topics

Talking League with the Co-presidents: Co-presidents Anne Borg and/or Marilyn Peterson can give an update on LWVMA happenings, hear feedback about League programs, and/or get input on future directions.

Meet the Executive Director: Executive Director Meryl Kessler is available to discuss LWVMA happenings and seek input on future directions.

Action priorities of LWVMA and LWVUS: Depending on your needs, this can be a short presentation of League priorities, or a more detailed discussion of ongoing legislation and advocacy activities.

Democracy in the Balance (money and politics): This is a meaty presentation appropriate for larger groups of members and the community.

Advocating on a specific topic of interest to your League: A legislative specialist or other program and action committee member can help your League consider advocating for a state-level issue.

Leagues in Massachusetts: Who are they and how do they work? This presentation describes the 46 Leagues in Massachusetts including size, governance structure, dues, etc.

Facilitating a board retreat: This is appropriate for boards which want an outside facilitator for a board discussion.

Resources for running a local League: Whatever your League needs: website, electronic bulletin, advice working with the press, amending bylaws, fundraising, managing finances and renewals, expanding membership or any combination!

What Would You like Convention to Cover?

A survey to collect member input for the 2015 Convention was sent via email to all members on Monday, January 12. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete and is available [here](#).

The 2015 LWVMA Convention, "Women Leading the Way," will be held May 15-16 at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield. Updates to Convention 2015 plans will be posted on the LWVMA website [Convention page](#).

THE TO DO LIST

State Program Planning Recommendations

Be sure your League's voice is heard as the state board prepares to propose a program of action for the next two years at the May Convention. Engage your members in program planning and send in your recommendations by February 9. You can find the information packet and the forms [here](#).

LWVUS Offers Webinar on Program Process



The LWVUS Program Planning and Support (PP&S) Committee will put on a webinar on League program process Wednesday, January 21, from 3 to 4 p.m. PP&S Committee Chair Barbara Zia and Advocacy Chair Chris Carson will outline the basics of the League's program process. The webinar is designed to help Leagues understand League program from A to Z, including how to use national positions to take action locally. You can register for the webinar [here](#). For further information or questions, contact

[Betsy Lawson](#).

Don't Forget to Update Your League's Roster

The deadline to update your local League's membership roster on the LWVUS website is Friday, January 31, at midnight. LWVUS and LWVMA will calculate your League's PMP assessment based on the number of active members in the roster on February 1. If you have questions, or need help with the updating, contact [Brynne Gorman](#) at the LWVMA office, 617-523-2999; or [Karen Price](#), LWVMA Vice President.

As you are updating the roster, please also enter as many email addresses for your members as possible in the LWVUS database. Almost all communication from LWVUS and LWVMA is electronic, and if we do not have the email addresses, your members are not getting important League information.

Right now the state League mails the Mass. League Voter four times a year to members without email addresses in our database, at a considerable expense. Your help adding email address to the LWVUS database is most appreciated!

Suggestions for LWVMA Bylaws Changes?

The Bylaws Committee will be reviewing LWVMA's bylaws, and will present proposed changes to the bylaws at the May Convention. If your League would like to suggest a change to any section of the current bylaws, your suggestions are due by February 15. Please [click here](#) for the form and instructions. For questions, please contact Bylaws Committee Chair [Marlene O'Brien](#).



WEBPAGE OF THE MONTH: Calendar of Events

To go with the new calendar on your wall, check out the League Calendar of Events. There's a quick link to the calendar on the right side of our [home page](#). Click on that and you can see what's happening when at the state level, plus events local Leagues have scheduled. Click on any individual entry for details about the event.

To include your League's events, just send a brief description of the event, date, time, place and whether it's open to the public to [us](#).

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.

Quick Links

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