

April 2015



The Mass. League Voter

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

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CALENDAR

Friday, April 24	LWVMA/LESF Board Meeting, Wellesley Community Center, Wellesley, MA from 10:45 until 2pm
Tuesday, April 28	Day on the Hill, the State House, Boston, MA from 9:30am until noon.
Sunday May 3	LWVMA 95th Birthday Party, Concord, MA from 2pm until 4pm
Friday, May 15 - Saturday May 16	LWVMA 2015 Convention, Clarion Hotel, West Springfield, MA

A Word From Our Co-Presidents

Dear League Members,

Spring is always a busy time for Leaguers. Many of us are planning our local League's annual meeting, facilitating voter engagement and education during Town Meeting time, and/or registering high school students as the next generation of voters.



The state League has been busy, too, and we hope to see many of you at our upcoming events (you can find details about each of these events, and the links to participate, elsewhere in this newsletter):

- LWVMA's annual Day on the Hill lobby day will be Tuesday, April 28. LWVMA is supporting a number of important bills this session. Come hear our specialists discuss some of the bills and then visit your legislators to urge them to support these bills. A large League contingent makes a difference!
- On Sunday, May 3, LWVMA celebrate its 95th Birthday, at a League member's home in Concord. Our special guest speaker will be Stephanie Pollack, the new state Secretary of Transportation. With transportation issues so much in the news, don't miss this unique opportunity to discuss such an important issue directly with Secretary Pollack.
- LWVMA's biennial Convention will be Friday, May 15 to Saturday, May 16, at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield. Convention is a great opportunity to hear interesting speakers, participate in the important business of the state League, and connect and have fun with other League members from across the state!

And, don't forget to keep in touch with state League information on our [website](#) and our [Facebook page](#).

In League,

Marilyn Anne

Marilyn Peterson and Anne Borg

HAPPENING NOW

Make an Impact on Beacon Hill

A state Senator once said he pays attention to League views on legislation because, unlike some advocacy groups, the League has members, not just a mailing list. Day on the Hill is a chance to show the force of our membership. **Please plan to join with your fellow League members Tuesday, April 28, to make our voice heard.** [Register here.](#)

Our theme this year is "A Vision for Massachusetts" as the new legislative session gets under way. Sen. Stanley Rosenberg, the president of the Senate, will be our keynote speaker, sharing his vision and his thoughts on this session.

Day on the Hill is the Massachusetts' League's annual lobbying day. Registration is at 9:30 a.m. and the program begins at 10 a.m. in Gardner Auditorium in the State House.



[Read more....](#)

Why You Should Be at the State League's Convention

Friday hotel deadline! Friday, April 24, is the last day to be sure you can get a room at the LWVMA Convention hotel and at the discounted rate. After April 24 there is no guarantee a room will be available and the rate may change. There is no cost to reserve a room. You must call the hotel at 413-781-8750 and ask for the League of Women Voters Convention rate. See details on the [Convention webpage](#).

LWVMA is holding its biennial Convention Friday and Saturday, May 15-16, at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield. Every member is welcome, and we hope that every League is represented.

Why should you come?

First, a League Convention is fun and it is stimulating. You will meet some exceptional people and have a chance to share ideas to make your League more effective. You are guaranteed to go home inspired and energized.

Second, we will make some major decisions about LWVMA's actions for the next two years. Chief among them is whether the state League should undertake a two-year study of charter schools that could lead to a League position on that very pressing subject. A vote at Convention will decide whether we do that study. Delegates will also be voting on what topics and actions the state League should be putting its energy behind. [Read more...](#)

Join Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack at LWVMA's 95th Birthday



After a winter of crippling rail problems, the Commonwealth's transportation system is front-page news. To understand the challenges and opportunities ahead, we invite you to join fellow League members to meet and speak with our new Secretary of Transportation, Stephanie Pollack, from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, May 3 in Concord. We are privileged and excited to have Secretary Pollack as our guest!

Come learn with us and celebrate LWVMA's 95th birthday in style. You can [register online here](#). Per person donations benefit our Citizen Education Fund and begin at \$50; you will receive the street address following registration.

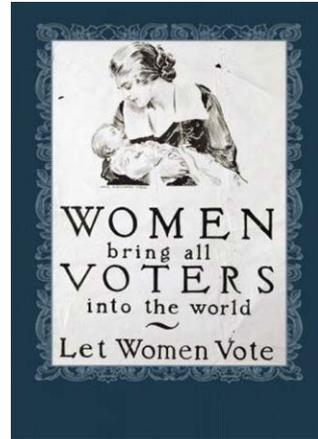
Honor a Special Woman for Mother's Day -- And Support LWVMA

For a \$25 donation, LWVMA will send a card to a special woman

in your life, 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 you to recognize a mother, grandmother, sister, daughter, aunt, niece, cousin, friend...or anyone else! You can also forward this information to your own family and tell them this is the gift you would like for Mother's Day!

The card features an historic suffrage illustration; the inside text reads, "Happy Mother's Day! In recognition of all that you have brought into the world, a gift has been made in your honor to the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts by [your name]."



Donations will go to our Citizen Education Fund to support voter service and education programs and are tax-deductible. To order by check or credit card, please [click here](#). Orders must be received by April 30 to ensure delivery by Mother's Day May 10.

ADVOCACY

Continuing the Good Fight



LWVMA members Launa Zimmaro, Lynn Wolbarst and Karen Price joined the Demand Disclosure - Congress Not Required! rally on Boston Common on the first anniversary of the *McCutcheon v FEC* Supreme Court decision to urge President Obama to sign an Executive Order requiring disclosure of campaign contributions by federal contractors to shine a light on one big source of dark money in our political system

The Legislature is Gearing Up

After a slow start, the Massachusetts state legislature is beginning to move on bills that were submitted when this new session began in January. The two-year session winds up at the end of July 2016.

Because of a dispute between the House and Senate leadership over the joint committee structure used in the legislature, Senate bills did not receive formal numbers and committee assignments until last week. But now, you can look up any bill on the [legislature's website](#).

LWVMA's Legislative Action Committee is hard at work reviewing bills and recommending bills for the state League to support or oppose. [Read more...](#)

AROUND THE LEAGUE

A New League Growing in Springfield



For the past two years we have been working to have a League presence, once again, in Springfield. On March 29, fourteen women leaders from Springfield came together to form the Springfield Unit of the Northampton Area LWV.

As a start, this group plans to focus on providing information on candidates in the upcoming city elections, and getting the women of Springfield out to vote. Low voter turnout is a major problem

in Springfield and Hampden County, compared with turnout in the rest of western Massachusetts.

The driving force behind this group is social and political activist Linda O'Connell. She believes that the LWV can be an important tool for encouraging civic engagement and enfranchising women who have been on the margins. [Read more...](#)

Students Tell Legislature What's On Their Minds in Video Contest

For the second year in a row, Massachusetts high school students responded enthusiastically to our Student Video Contest, with entries arriving from across the state.

This year's contest -- "There Oughta Be a Law" -- invited students to submit two-minute videos with ideas for new laws to keep Massachusetts great. The contest presented students with a great opportunity to share their ideas for change with a broader audience.



So, what's on young people's minds? Voter registration, campaign finance, GMOs, education, energy, recycling, transportation, public art, and suicide prevention...to name just a few of the topics addressed in the videos we received.

A team of dedicated LWVMA judges is evaluating the videos, and winners will be announced May 8. The three winning videos will debut at Convention--don't miss them! They will also be on our website.

Inequality Forum Video Available

You can view a video of the March 19 forum "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 our website now by [clicking here](#).



A panel discussed how the dramatic rise in economic inequality is affecting political participation in our country. Noah Berger, Executive Director, Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center; Katherine Levine Einstein, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Boston University; and Kay Schlozman, J. Joseph Moakley Professor of Political Science, Boston College were the panelists.

Enjoy our 2013-14 Annual Report

We are pleased to share the 2013-14 Annual Report of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts. The report recaps an extraordinary year of advocacy, voter engagement, and citizen education and celebrates the work of our 46 local Leagues throughout the Commonwealth. Many thanks to our members and supporters for helping us Make Democracy Work.

To download and view the Annual Report as a pdf, click [here](#). Or you can view the report as a magazine by clicking [here](#).

eHelp LWVMA Win *Boston Globe* Grant



For the second year, the *Boston Globe* will be awarding grants of advertising space to non-profit organizations. If you are a *Boston Globe* subscriber, when you receive a silver envelope announcing the grant program, please consider listing the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Fund on your voucher. Last year, the Scharfman fund received advertising space worth \$6,800, about an eighth of a page, thanks to *Globe* subscribers.

If you are a *Globe* subscriber but don't have the mailed voucher, you can participate in the program online [here](#). The deadline is April 30.

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.

Quick Links

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