

April 2015



League of Women Voters®

Massachusetts

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CALENDAR

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

HAPPENING NOW

[**Make the League's Voice Heard on Beacon Hill**](#)

Plan now to attend LWVMA's annual Day on the Hill lobbying day **Tuesday, April 28**, in the Gardner Auditorium of the State House. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. with the program from 10 a.m. to noon.

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.



After Sen. Rosenberg's remarks and a question-and-answer period, our legislative specialists will outline some of the major bills they are following. You will find information on those bills in the [packet](#) emailed to all members April 9, and we encourage you to review that information in advance. After the program, we hope you will take time to visit your own Senators and Representatives and ask them to support League-supported bills.

Please register in advance for Day on the Hill [here](#). The office will let legislators know to expect a visit from League member constituents, or you may make your own arrangements with your legislators. LWVMA will be distributing information on the bills in our advocacy packet to legislators.

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 be a part of that force.

Celebrate the League's 95th Birthday with MA Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack



LWVMA turns 95 in May! Please come celebrate our amazing history and accomplishments at a League birthday party, **Sunday, May 3**, from 2 to 4 p.m. at a member's home in Concord.

We are delighted that Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack will join us and share her thoughts on the timely topic of our state's transportation opportunities and challenges.

Donations start at \$50 per person. To register, please [click here](#). You will receive an email with the street address and parking instructions prior to the event.

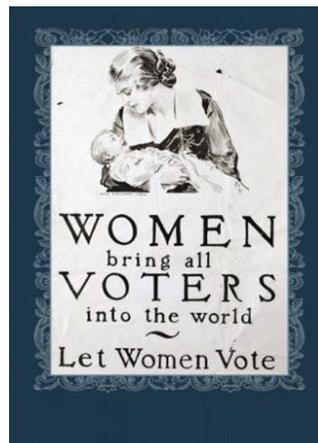
Come celebrate and learn with us!

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

LWVMA

For a \$25 donation, we 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 a 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.

Getting Ready for Convention! League Leader Checklist

All League Members (whose email address we have) received the "Final Call to Convention." As League leaders, here are some items you should be aware of as we prepare for LWVMA's Convention 2015: Women Leading the Way, **Friday and Saturday, May 15-16**, at the Clarion Hotel in West Springfield.

Make sure your League is represented! We would love to see members from every League at Convention 2015! Encourage all members to attend. You can use [this link](#) to the information and registration webpage in your local bulletins and emails.

Be aware of the deadlines: **April 24** for hotel reservations; **May 5** for convention registration. Note hotel reservation **must** be made by telephone (see details at [convention webpage](#)).

Register your members as delegates. Only delegates can vote, and the delegate count for your League is based on the number of members as of February 1. The [convention webpage](#) includes a list of the number of delegates per League, and a form to submit to LWVMA with the names of your delegates. Non-delegates, or "observers," may participate in all aspects of convention except voting.

Do you have more members attending than delegate slots? Once again the LWVMA is allowing "delegate sharing" among Leagues. If one League is not using all its delegate slots, a member of a different local League may represent that League, providing the League with the available slots agrees. If your League is willing to share some of its delegate slots, or if your League has more attendees than slots and a member would like to represent another League as a delegate, please contact [Brynne Gorman](#) in the office. Tell her the name of your League, whether you need delegate slots (number) or whether you are willing to share delegate slots (number). Brynne will put the Leagues in contact with one another.

Local League Donations to LWVMA at Convention. Traditionally local Leagues make donations to LWVMA at Convention. Please consider a donation, perhaps in honor or in memory of a special person in your League. At Convention, Leagues will be given time to announce their gifts. A form to submit with your gift is available on the [convention webpage](#).

Local League Showcase. Once again, Convention will feature a one-minute presentation from each League attending. The Showcase minute can cover a highlight of the past year or a quick summary of several highlights. Because of agenda time constraints, the one-minute rule will be strictly enforced.

Silent Auction. If your League can donate an item to the Silent Auction please contact [Jean Cherdack](#).

Find Out More. Information on speakers, schedule of events, workshops, pre-convention workbook, etc., are all available on the [convention webpage](#).

AROUND THE LEAGUE

It's Membership Renewal Season -- What's in Your Letter?

Many Leagues do their annual renewals in the spring, using a membership renewal letter or email. If you have been using the same letter for several years, maybe it is time to consider a new format or content. Renewal letters are important! We all get the feeling no one is reading anything, but your audience is out there. You've worked hard to bring members into the League, renewal time is your opportunity to keep them.

Try incorporating these points into your letters:

Your League is valuable. The League has a lot to offer members; be sure to identify why the League is valuable and what members 'get' for their dues. Feel free to include state and national programs, because members join at all three levels.

Show Passion. Don't be afraid to demonstrate the passion and drive you feel for the work. Remind people of the reasons they joined in the first place.

Look to the Future. Celebrate the great things the League did this year but also be sure to include specifics about next year.

Remember the details. Be very clear on how to renew. Be sure information on web links, writing checks, where to mail, etc. are clear and correct. A deadline to renew also helps.

Make the Extra Ask. Once a person has already committed to writing a dues check or paying on-line to the League, it is quite possible that they will be willing to give a bit more to the organization. Some possible text: "With our dues remaining at \$XX annually, we hope with your renewal you may be able to give an additional gift of \$10, \$50, \$100 or more to provide much needed funding for (your League name) programs."

Even with your great letter and all the compelling reasons to be a member, there will be people who seem to be ignoring your request to renew. It's not personal! Many people need a second or third reminder, phone call, or personal visit.

[Click here](#) for a sample letter. This article and sample letter are adapted from the LWVUS [member website](#).

Students Tell Legislature What's On Their Minds in LWVMA 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 on May 8. The three winning videos will debut at Convention--don't miss them! They will also be on our website.

New Voter Registration Cards

As you make plans to register students to vote at your local high schools, be aware that there are new voter registration cards to use. You can pick them up at your town clerk or city election official's office. These cards include new party affiliations--the United Independent and Green Rainbow parties, added because of the vote totals those parties got last November. Please discard any old registration cards.

LWVUS offers a guide to high school voter registration [here](#) and also has a [webinar](#) on high school registration. Please let us know 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](#).

Fall Appeal and Phonathon Surpass Goals, Return Money to Local Leagues

Thanks to our loyal donors and our local Leagues, LWVMA's annual Fall Appeal and Phonathon have so far raised over \$51,000 to support the operations and the programs of both the state League and the Scharfman Citizen Education Fund. The incredible generosity of our donors and the dedication of our callers made this campaign a success. The money raised through this annual appeal is a critical part of

our budget and helps fund membership events, outreach, and support; citizen education projects; and voter service.

In February, as part of our local League revenue sharing program, LWVMA sent checks totaling approximately \$4,600 to 32 local Leagues. Shares for local Leagues were calculated as follows:

- Local Leagues received 15% of contributions of \$100 or more and 10% of contributions of less than \$100 made by their members before the Oct. 24 calling deadline.
- Donations obtained by Leagues which called donors in the Phonathon generated a 10% share of all money received for the League making the call.

LWVMA applauds the efforts of the Leagues that made Phonathon calls, including Acton Area, Concord-Carlisle, Hamilton-Wenham, Needham, Newton, Sudbury, Wellesley, and Winchester.

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 of experts 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.

Important Notice from LWVUS on New National Database

Please read and share this information with those in your League who deal with the LWVUS database.

The national League is moving to a new database system that will help us connect more effectively with LWV members and other activists or constituents. This transition will mean the LWV Membership Database must be temporarily locked starting April 23, 2015, in preparation for conversion to the new system. The system will be inaccessible for at least five weeks.

LWVUS has described Action Items all Leagues should carry out before **April 23**.

- Download your roster.
- Designate one person to serve as a Roster Manager moving forward. Register your Roster Manager at [this link](#).
- Update whatever data and leadership changes you can before the system is locked on April 23.

While the system is locked (at least 5 weeks), maintain your records in a spreadsheet. When the new system is ready, information and training for League Roster Managers will be available through training webinars from June through August.

For complete information of the transition visit the LWVUS website [here](#).

No Increase in State Per Member Payments

As you work on your budgets, LWVMA is pleased to announce that there will be no increase in state PMPs (per member payments) for the coming fiscal year. State PMPs will remain individual, \$23; second in household, \$5.75; and student, \$2.30.

LWVUS PMPs will increase by \$1 starting in July, to individual, \$32; second in household, \$16; and student, \$16. No PMP is required at the state or national levels for 50-year-plus members.

Webpage of the Month: History & Accomplishments

As we celebrate the 95th anniversaries of both the national and Massachusetts Leagues, take a look at a brief history on our [website](#).



And as a reminder that we still continue the fights of our foremothers, this anecdote: One hundred years ago, the fight to get the vote for women faced a

determined opposition funded by a relatively few well-heeled donors. In 1915, a suffrage parade of 30,000 women and men marched down Fifth Avenue in New York City past the Union League Club where a group of great men in city affairs watched. One of these men jumped to his feet and exclaimed, "I never understood the menace of this woman suffrage campaign as I do now. Here is a hundred dollars to defeat it. Who will join me?" Carrie Chapman Catt remarked on this occasion that "the dollars came plentifully, for the politically great find democracy troublesome."

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.

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