LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF FREDERICK COUNTY

65th ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, April 19, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

In-Person Meeting in the Community Room
at the Thurmont Public Library
with Zoom Option

ZOOM INVITE: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88483030108

Annual Meeting
League of Women Voters of Frederick County

NOTICE

The Annual Meeting is required of the League of Women Voters of Frederick County (LWVFC) in its bylaws. As a convening body, the Annual Meeting prescribes by its action the basic direction of the organization and its elected leaders.

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to:

1) Adopt a Local Program for the next year
2) Elect Officers and Directors and members of the Nominating Committee
3) Adopt an adequate budget, and
4) Transact other business as they may properly come before it, such as:
    a. accept the previous Annual Meeting minutes
    b. accept annual committee reports
    c. approval of the annual Treasurer's report after audit; and
    d. amendments to the Bylaws.

Members may not vote absentee or by proxy to elect officers of the local League. Members whose dues are current are eligible to vote and are entitled to take an active part in all business conducted by the Annual Meeting. Members may pay their dues at the door, pay by check made out to LWVUS and mail the check to League of Women Voters of Frederick County, PO Box 9, Frederick, MD 21705, or log onto ChapterSpot at https://portal.lwv.org/.

After review of the Workbook, members may suggest changes in the Proposed Local Program. Suggestions must be written, signed, and submitted to the League of Women Voters of Frederick County, c/o The Leadership Team, PO Box 9, Frederick, MD 21705, or submitted via email to mailto:lwvoffc@gmail.com as of April 10, 2024.

I. **Call to Order**
II. **Roll Call – Confirm that there is a Quorum (20% of total membership of 104 = 21)**
III. **Credentials Report**
IV. **Adoption of the Agenda**

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

III. Credentials Report

IV. Adoption of Agenda

V. Introduction of Speaker

Presentation by speaker:

VI. Adoption of Rules for Annual Meeting

VII. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 64th Annual Meeting, April 29, 2024

VIII. Report of the Auditor

IX. Report of the Treasurer and Budget

a. Discussion and Vote to Approve

X. Report on Membership

XI. Report on other committees

- Publicity
- Ethics
- Voter Services

XII. Bylaws - Recommended Amendments

XIII. Update of Local Program for 2024-2025; Discussion and Vote to Approve

XIV Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers; Discussion and Vote to Approve

XV. Directions to the Board

XVI. Adjournment

V. Introduction of, and presentation by, the Guest Speaker

Our Guest speaker this year is Cathryn A. Paul is the Public Policy Director of CASA.

CASA* works to ensure that immigrant voices are heard and amplified in Annapolis. From annual lobby events with legislators, to tireless organizing efforts, CASA is committed to moving forward meaningful immigration reform in Maryland. Together, with partners from across the state, CASA has achieved tremendous accomplishments from passing the Maryland Dream Act in 2012 to winning access to driver's licenses for all in 2013 to raising the minimum wage in 2019 to ending state and local participation in ICE detention in Maryland in 2021. Outside of immigration, CASA has led and contributed to campaigns to pass meaningful police reform, tenant rights, and worker protection legislation. With over 100,000 members, CASA will continue to demand real policy changes that will pull the hundreds of thousands of immigrant families in Maryland into greater power, dignity and legitimacy.
Find out more about CASA at https://wearecasa.org/about/.

*CASA stands for Central American Solidarity Association.

VI. Adoption of Rules for the Annual Meeting

Voting Eligibility

All members of the League of Women Voters of Frederick County whose dues for the current year are paid are eligible to vote and are entitled to take an active part in all business conducted.

Parliamentary Procedure: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised governs the conduct of business at the Annual Meeting where they are not inconsistent with LWVFC Bylaws.

- A member who wishes to speak shall speak and, when recognized, give his/her name. No member shall speak in debate twice until all who wish to speak for the first time have been heard. No member may speak longer than three minutes without permission.
- Members who wish to present a motion of substance shall email the motion to lwvoffc@gmail.com no later than **April 7th, 2025**.
- Twenty percent of the LWVFC membership constitutes a quorum at the Annual Meeting.

Election

- The current Nominating Committee conducts the election of officers, directors and the two non-Board members of the Nominating Committee for the coming year.
- Immediately following the report of the Nominating Committee, voting members may nominate other voting members from the floor with the prior consent of each nominee.
- Since there is one nominee for each office, the secretary will be directed to cast a unanimous vote to accept the Nominating Committee's report if there are no objections.
- In the case that a floor nomination results in the need for a vote, the vote will be conducted by roll call with each member stating the name of their preferred candidate.

VOTE REQUIREMENTS FOR ANNUAL MEETING ACTION

Adoption of issues in the **Proposed Local Program** Recommended by the Board **Majority** vote of voting members present
Consideration of issues not recommended by the Board Majority vote (A voting member may move consideration and present reasons in a statement limited to 5 minutes. A Board member may present the official negative in a statement limited to 5 minutes.) (Members may not debate the not recommended issue, but they may ask statement questions for clarification.)
Adoption of issues not recommended by the Board **Two-thirds** vote
Adoption of a recommended amendment to a program issue **Two-thirds** vote

Consideration of a not recommended amendment **Majority** vote
Adoption of a not recommended amendment **Two-thirds** vote
Adoption of amendments to the **Bylaws Two-thirds** vote of the voting members present

VII. ACCEPTANCE of the MINUTES of the 64th Annual Meeting, April 29, 2023

League of Women Voters of Frederick County, MD
64th Annual Meeting Minutes, April 27, 2024

Attendees

In Person: Suzy Bailey, Mike Bunitsky, George Carroll, Patti Connor, Melanie Cox, Jan Daffern, Jim Filson, Mary Ann C. Ford, Anne Garrett, Jill Griffith, Lauri Gross, Margaret Hindman, Nannette Hobson, Kate Jones, Fran Keeley, Linda Kohn (President of LWVMD), Claire Kondig, Sue Krause, Sue Kunkel, Nancy Purinton, Sarah Matthews, Rosemary Orthmann, Cindy Powell, Mary Ellen Rhoderick, Rosanne Roe, Ellen West.
Virtually: Suzanne Beal, Mary Beth Coker.

Read Notice

Jim Filson read the Notice, which states that the Bylaws require the League of Women Voters of Frederick County (LWVFC) to hold an annual meeting. Its purpose is to adopt a new annual program; elect officers, directors, and members of the Nominating Committee; adopt a new annual budget; accept the minutes for the 2023 LWVFC 63rd Annual Meeting, annual committee reports, and Treasurer's report; and amend the Bylaws.

I. Call to Order

Claire Klondig called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm. She recognized one member who had just joined the league, Nannette Hobson, and Linda Kohn, the President of LWVMD. She recognized the work of the leadership team (Jim Filson, Lauri Gross, and herself) during the pandemic and after. She also mentioned that the state and national LWV is implementing a new system of collecting dues in order to streamline the process. Claire indicated that she has retired as Treasurer and Sue Kunkel will become the new Treasurer.

II./III. Roll Call/Credentials Report

Sue Krause stated that the LWVFC has 80 members. The bylaws require a quorum of 20 percent, which would be 16 attendees. Since 26 members attended in person and 2 members attended virtually, a quorum was present for the meeting to proceed.

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Sarah Matthews moved to adopt the agenda and Ellen West seconded the motion. The agenda was adopted as presented.

V. Ryan Trout's Presentation

Lauri Gross introduced the speaker, Ryan Trout. As the Chief Housing Officer of CNHED and Senior Policy Analyst for PHADA, Mr. Trout has worked on emergency rental and first-time homebuyer assistance; low-income rehab, seniors, and homelessness housing; LIHTC developer assistance; inclusionary zoning ordinances; and landlord-tenant cases.

In his talk, Ryan stressed that access to affordable housing determines access to food, healthcare, education, jobs, and quality of life. The lack of housing places pressure on all levels of housing, as home buyers not finding higher-end housing purchase downward, reducing the amount of lower-end housing and leading to gentrification and homelessness. While the Frederick City and County Councils have budgeted resources to address the increase in required housing from 5,000 to 10,000 units, these resources are insufficient to meet the needs of a growing population of young people, those working low- and mid-level jobs, and aging seniors. Builders currently pay a fee to exclude lower-cost housing in their plans. That fee is being increased, because builders find it more cost-effective to pay the fee than build lower-cost housing. Additional builder incentives, such as grants, tax credits, and subsidies, are needed to ensure adequate affordable housing. The growing population will also require more gap financing for first-time homebuyers, schools, infrastructure, and social services. Mr. Trout appealed to league members to continue advocating for adequate affordable housing in Frederick County.

VI. Adoption of Meeting Rules

Claire read the meeting rules, which follow the Parliamentary procedures of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, and the LWVFC Bylaws. All members whose dues are paid can vote and participate in the business of the meeting. A motion to adopt the rules was moved and seconded, so the meeting rules were adopted.

VII. Acceptance of 63rd Annual Meeting Minutes

The Minutes of the 63rd Annual Meeting of the LWVFC, April 29, 2023, were presented. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The minutes were then marked as accepted.

VIII. Report of Auditor

Jim Filson called on Claire to present the upcoming Report to the Auditor. Claire indicated that the Auditor, Kathy Rosen, will receive and review the financial books of the LWVFC and will report back to the board.

IX. Report of Treasurer

As the outgoing Treasurer, Claire Kondig presented the April 27, 2024, Report of the Treasurer. As a member of the Budget Committee, Jill Griffith will provide support to the incoming Treasurer, Sue Kunkel. The current checking account balance is $7,568.16 and the Education Fund contains $1,232.27. The league has received over $1,000 in donations. All dues are paid, including to the LWVNCA. The Education Fund has enough money to cover half of the LWVMD dues for 2024-2025. The 2024-2025 budget was adopted with unanimous voice vote.

X. Membership Report

The LWVFC currently has 80 members, which include eleven new or renewing members and two new non-dues-paying student members. The league also has two lifetime members. The Membership Committee has worked hard to welcome new members, including sending welcome letters and other materials and the league's newsletter. Almost 28 members have let their membership expire. The committee has contacted members with lapsed dues by letter, email, and text to request they pay their dues (due May 1). The committee continues to work on recruiting new members at league events, improving new member orientation, and increasing membership diversity.

XI. Other Committees' Reports

Ethics Committee: As committee chair Jessica El-Zeftawy worked with several nonpartisan community organizations to support the Frederick County Ethics Commission, including recruiting new members for the Commission by advertising for the positions in the league's social media and newsletter. In 2024-2025, Mary Beth Coker will chair the committee with support from Jessica El-Zeftawy.

Publicity Committee: Rosemary Orthmann chaired the Publicity Committee supported by Lauri Gross, Through press releases and an expanded press list, the committee obtained several articles in the *Frederick News Post,* including on the LWVMD convention in Frederick, Voter Registration Day events, league's Ranked Choice Voting program, December Legislative Breakfast, online Voters' Guide and VOTE411, and 2024 virtual candidate forums.

Voters Services: Jim Filson reported that committee members supported voter information and registration tables at First Saturdays, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Xa Loi Temple events, and Streets and Hispanic Festivals. A committee member attended the Board of Elections meetings and reported on important relevant information. The committee helped host the LWVMD's annual state convention in Frederick, including obtaining Jessica Fitzwater as the opening speaker. The committee hosted virtual forums for District 6 and Frederick County Board of Education candidates.

XII. Proposed Amendments to Bylaws

Lauri proposed that the Bylaws allow the LWVFC President and Vice Presidents to serve either one or two years rather than requiring them to serve two years. Ellen West moved to adopt this change to the Bylaws and Sarah Matthews seconded, so that proposed change to the Bylaws was passed. Kate Jones proposed that LWVFC incorporate the LWVUS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) statement into its Bylaws. Mike Bunitsky moved that that change to the Bylaws be adopted and Margaret Hindman seconded, so that change was adopted. Kate also proposed that the Bylaws be changed to indicate whether board members can make campaign contributions and display campaign signs for candidates. After discussion, it was clarified that the league's Go Vote signs cannot be displayed with campaign signs. Finally, Kate proposed a change to the Bylaws about the new LWVUS system of collecting and disbursing dues and a Fiscal Year ending December 31. Lauri moved that that change to the Bylaws regarding dues be made and Ellen seconded. Bylaws changes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

XIII. May 2024-April 2025 Program

Representative Government: The league will continue to provide factual, unbiased information about the election process and candidates to voters on VOTE411 and in the Voters' Guide. The league also sponsors candidate forums and interviews and provides speakers on election issues. The league will continue to work with the Frederick County Board of Elections to do poll monitoring for the primary and general elections. To help ensure ethical local government, the league will also continue to chair the Nominating Committee for the Frederick County Ethics Commission.

Natural Resources: The league will continue to support the implementation of Frederick County's Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan, including conserving the natural environment, implementing sound land use and growth management policies, creating a diversified economy, encouraging public participation in the planning process, and promoting quality of life.

Social Policy: The league will continue to monitor the activities of the Frederick County Police Accountability Board. The league promotes a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and fosters public trust. It supports practices that promote collaboration and safety for both law enforcement officers and the communities they serve. It emphasizes humane treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals into communities, while protecting the safety of those communities.

New Program: The league now supports the use of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), also known as Instant Runoff Voting, by Frederick County municipalities, including the acquisition of new voting equipment for RCV. This program is consistent with the LWVUS's support of electoral systems at every level of government that encourage participation, are verifiable and auditable, and enhance representation. The LWVFC held an RCV Forum for members and the public in November 2023.

Adoption: Sarah Matthews moved to adopt the entire 2024-2025 LWVFC Program and Rosemary seconded. The program was unanimously adopted by voice vote.

XIV. Nominating Committee Report and Election of Officers

Chair Margaret Hindman presented the Nominating Committee Report and reviewed the slate of candidates nominated to the Board. The following members have been nominated as Officers for two-year terms: Kate Jones as President, Patti Connor as 1st Vice President, Nannette Hobson as 2nd Vice President, and Sue Kunkel as Treasurer. Rosanne Roe serves as Secretary for one more year. Michael Bunitsky, Mary Beth Coker, Janette Goodman, Lauri Gross, and Suzanne Beal have been nominated as Directors for two-year terms. George Carroll, Jim Filson, Mary Sue Krause, Rosemary Orthmann, and Ellen West have been appointed as Directors for one-year terms. Margaret Hindman (Chair), Linda Norris, and Sue Rovin have been nominated to the Nominating Committee for one-year terms. As the outgoing Treasurer, Claire Kondig becomes an Emerita Director, along with Sue Rovin, Melanie Cox, Gail Bowerman, Mary Ellen Roderick, Mary Ann C. Ford, and Ellen West. Since each office had one nominee and no objections, Lauri directed Secretary Rosanne Roe to cast a unanimous vote to accept the Nominating Committee's report. Rosanne cast that unanimous vote and the Nominating Committee's report was accepted.

XV. Directions to Board

Lauri invited LWVFC members to give directions to the newly elected Board for completing their work in the coming year. None were proposed.

XVI. Adjournment

After noting that the next Board meeting is at 5pm on Monday, May 20, 2024, Lauri adjourned the LWVFC 64th Annual Meeting at 2:23pm.

Minutes submitted by Secretary Rosanne Roe.

VIII. Report of the Auditor

Auditor Kathy Rossen received and reviewed the financial books of the LWVFC and will report back to the board at the March Board meeting.

Report from Kathy Rosen, 3/2/2025: I have reviewed the financial records of the League of Women Voters of Frederick County from April 1, 2024, through February 28, 2025, and find them to be in good order and to accurately reflect the financial status of the organization.

Kathy Rossen
March 2, 2025

IX. Report of the Treasurer and Proposed Budget

Provided by Treasurer, Sue Kunkel

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FREDERICK COUNTY

PROPOSED 2025 – 2026 BUDGET - April 2025

League of Women Voters of Frederick County
Proposed Budget -- April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026

	Proposed April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025	Actual April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025	Proposed April 1, 2025 - March 31, 2026
Starting Balance		**$7,743.49**	**$8,929.89**
Revenue			
Dues through 1/31/2025			
Individual $60	3,009.65	$3,036.91	
Household $90	450.00	270.00	
Dues after transition			
$75 Level $13.62		176.93	340.25
$60 level $10.73			536.50
$20 level $3.04			76.00
Other amounts		$65.81	
Donations			

	General Fund	300.00	547.82	
	Educational Fund	400.00	$1,429.59	
	Fundraisers	1,000.00	$4,107.49	
	Annual Meeting		0.00	
	Legislative Breakfast	100.00	0.00	100.00
	International Dinner	50.00	0.00	
	Misc. Revenue	200.00	0.00	
	Election Monitoring		300.00	
	Bequest Contingency Fund	327.05		
	Total Revenue	**$5,836.70**	**$9,934.55**	**$1,052.75**
Expenses				
	General Administration			
	Brochures	100.00	965.54	
	Tabling Supplies		198.01	250.00
	Domain Name Fee	15.15		20.00
	PO Box	194.00	200.00	210.00
	Website Fee	425.00	425.00	425.00
	Zoom Fee	80.00	74.95	80.00
	Misc Admin	50.00		
	Per Member Payments			
	LWVUS ($32 I/$48 HH)	3,038.00	1,968.00	3,328.00
	LWVMD ($15 I/$22.50 HH)	987.00	861.00	1,560.00
	LWVNCA (1.101 I/$1.65 HH)	77.55	67.65	
	Annual Meeting	50.00		
	Articles of Incorporation		80.00	
	Community Events		325.00	700.00
	Conventions			
	LWVNCA	70.00		
	LWVUS	250.00	925.00	
	LWVMD			250.00
	Legislative Breakfast	200.00		700.00
	Gift Memberships - 5 @$20			100.00
	Liability Insurance			
	Membership Committee	100.00		
	Penalties		700.00	
	Program Committee			
	Voters' Services	200.00		
	ASL Interpreting		1,425.00	1,500.00
	Voters' Guide Spanish Translation		494.00	500.00
	Workshops		39.00	50.00

Total Expenses	**$5,836.70**	**$8,748.15**	**$9,673.00**
Ending Balance		**$8,929.89**	**$309.64**

Members are encouraged to contribute to the LWVFC Education Fund which is tax-deductible. Write checks to LWVFC and note "Education Fund" on the memo line. Donations can also be made electronically by going to our "Donations" page on our website. All funds for the Ed. Fund are forwarded to the LWVMD. Our Education Fund balance is $2,879.80

Members can also make donations to the general fund, which are not tax-deductible.

Members often provide "in-kind" support to the LWVFC by paying for their attendance at workshops, for printing, for stamps, and for other administrative costs. This year "in-kind" donations included members paying for tabling event registrations, formatting of the Voters' Guide for printing, and paying for convention attendance.

Liability Insurance is held by the LWVMD and can be requested as events require it.

Projecting the Proposed Budget depends primarily on costs for voter education, such as ASL interpretation and Spanish translation, the costs associated with the community events we attend, the success of fund-raising drives, and the level of dues payment members select when they renew or join,

Note: Proposed budget categories are flexible and may shift based on need and with LWV Board approval.

X. Membership Report

Membership Committee 2024-2025 Annual Report

Submitted Feb. 17, 2025
Committee: Mary Sue Krause, Jill Griffith, Ellen West, Kate Jones, Sue Kunkel and Lauri Gross

During the past year, the League of Women Voters of Frederick County welcomed 64 new and renewing members to their rolls. In addition to these new dues-paying active members, our membership included 2 student members, who, during 2024, were not required to pay dues. Welcome letters and other information materials were mailed to these new members. 26 members allowed their membership to expire, as of January 31, 2025, which was the deadline for reporting our active membership numbers to the Maryland State League of Women Voters and the US League. As of January 31, 2025, the LWVFC had 100 active members, which include primary members, 8 "additional" members (usually spouses of an active member in a "household membership"), 0 lifetime members, and 2 student members.

The year in review has undergone major change in how membership is managed. As of February 3, 2025, the national League of Women Voters made changes to our membership process to make it easier for local chapters, which are mainly run by volunteers, to manage finances. At this writing the change is transitioning membership from older processes to the new membership portal. Prior to the change, local league efforts were made to clarify membership documentation, current members, status of members, and outreach to members who had not paid dues in the last year. In addition, membership processes were standardized to ensure that we were engaging with new members. Welcome letters and acknowledgement of the receipt of dues were standardized and consistently managed. A group of leaders provided communication to monitor our outreach.

At community events we reach out to all participants who visit our table with the aim of growing our membership and becoming more representative of the diversity in our community.

An impressive effort to table events this year include:

- Homewood at Frederick (2 locations)
- Voter Engagement events at Hood College
- Delta Sigma Theta Community Day
- Frederick Pride Day
- Asia on the Creek
- Frederick County Public Schools - High Schools
- Move Your Vote Forward
- In the Streets
- Hispanic Heritage Festival,
- Asian American Center of Frederick Annual Health Fair
- Brunswick Railroad Days
- Frederick County Public Libraries

New member engagement activities also included one New Member event in November 2024. All members were invited to a social before the Board meeting to talk about what the League of Women Voters of Frederick County does, and how we do it. We are focused on encouraging the members to take on the activities of the League. Efforts will continue to recruit and retain membership and will focus on providing information about what the LWV is doing in Frederick County, in Maryland, and at the national level. In the next year the membership committee will continue efforts to recruit members that represent all of Frederick County.

XI. Reports from other Committees

Annual Report for the Ethics Nominating Committee for 2024

The Ethics Nominating Committee was Chaired by Jessica El-Zeftawy until July 2024, when Mary Beth Coker became the Chair. The Nominating Committee was composed of Walter Olson (Ethics Committee), Roger Smith (Rotary Club), Lucy Hogan (Faith Community), Laurie Ward (Hood College), and Mary Beth Coker (LWVFC).

The Committee met via Zoom on June 3 to discuss a vacancy in the Ethics Committee membership and to interview candidates for the vacancy and as an alternate. Mr. Michael Bunitsky was nominated for a new term to expire on June 30, 2027, and Mr. Chris Perry was nominated to fill an unexpired term on June 30, 2025. Mr. Hayden Duke was approved as the alternate. All were subsequently appointed to the Ethics Commission by County Executive Jessica Fitzwater on June 9 and were confirmed by the Frederick County Council on July 9.

The Nominating Committee met on July 30 to discuss various updates and clarifications in the Standard Operating Procedure after the retirement of the longstanding chair, Mary Ellen Rhoderick. The changes (including a adding a policy about political activity of candidates and a statement that candidates would not be given the interview questions prior to the interviews) were approved by the Committee. The Committee also voted on and approved Mr. Hayden Duke to a full-time position on the Ethics Commission following the resignation of one of the members. Mr. Ford was subsequently approved by the County Council.

The Committee interviewed Ms. Margaret (Peggy) Vaughn for the position of Alternate on August 27 and approved her nomination. She was approved by County Executive Fitzwater and the County Council.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Beth Coker, Chair
Ethics Nominating Committee

Frederick County ethics law governing this commission can be found here: www.frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1618/Ethics-Law

Annual Publicity Committee Report - 2025

Chair: Lauri Gross, Rosanne Roe

SUMMARY
Since the 2024 LWVFC Annual Meeting, the Publicity Committee expanded the LWVFC press list to include WFMD and WFRE radio, plus publications throughout the county such as the Brunswick News-Journal, the Catoctin Banner, the Emmitsburg News-Journal, the Woodsboro-Walkersville News Journal, DC News Now TV, and more. This expanded press list, plus our many announcements and activities during the fall 2024 election season resulted in many stories about LWVFC and/or mentions in print, plus some on radio and TV. Highlights follow.

May 2024
- On May 2nd, FNP ran a story about our virtual forum for Board of Education candidates. Note: We sent out a press release about this forum in March 2024, which was included in the 2024 Annual Publicity Report.

September 2024
- Submitted to our press list, a press release about LWVFC's National Voter Registration Day events, and our presentations on abolishing the electoral college.
- In the Sept. 24 issue, the FNP ran a story about our planned school board and Congressional candidate forums.
- In the Sept. 27 issue, the FNP ran a story about our school board candidates' forum at the Missionary Baptist Church that we held in partnership with Delta Sigma Theta sorority
- In the Sept. 30 issue, the FNP ran a calendar item about our Middletown library presentation on abolishing the electoral college.
- As a result of our outreach to Stroll Ijamsville magazine, the magazine ran a story about Jim Filson and Mary Beth Coker, and LWVFC, in their Sept. issue.
- As a result of our outreach to Sass Magazine, the magazine ran a feature in their Sept-Oct. issue about local women in politics and included quotes from Kate Jones and info about LWVFC.

October 2024
- Submitted to our press list, a press release about our voter registration efforts being used in research by Univ. of Maryland Center for Democracy and Civic Engagement
- Submitted to our press list, a press release about Vote411, the Voters' Guide, and candidate forums, with mention of our Spanish-language version, and sign-language interpreters.
- In the Oct. 3 issue, the FNP ran a calendar item about our Congressional candidate forum at Hood College
- In the Oct 7 issue, the FNP ran a front-page, two-page story on our Congressional candidate forum at Hood College, and a calendar item about our voting info presentation at C. Burr Artz Library, and a calendar item about our Emmitsburg Library presentation on abolishing the electoral college.
- In the Oct. 21 issue, the FNP ran a story about our Board of Education forum at Hood College.

- As a result of our outreach to Frederick Magazine, the magazine ran a two-page feature story about LWVFC in their Oct. issue.
- In their Oct. issue, the Brunswick News-Journal ran a story about our Voters' Guide and candidate forums.

November 2024

- November 2024 Brunswick News-Journal article entitled "Should the Electoral College be Abolished?" which was about Lauri Gross's September talk on this topic at the Brunswick Library.
- In the Nov. 30-Dec. 1 edition, FNP ran our letter to the editor about out support for the ERA.

Annual report for Voter Services (from Lauri Gross and Kate Jones)

Voters' Guide – 2025 Annual Report

For the May 2024 primary election, the LWVFC Voters' Guide team produced the online Voters' Guide available at Vote411.org. For the November 2024 general election, the team produced the online Guide as well as a print Guide. Highlights of these efforts include:

- For the primary Voters' Guide, we encouraged candidates to submit their responses to our questions in Spanish and English, as the online Vote411 portal can accommodate both languages. Some candidates only responded in English for the primary election Voters' Guide, and some didn't respond at all. As we worked on the general election Voters' Guide, we nudged these candidates to answer, and to consider once again answering in both languages. As a result, nearly all candidate responses were available to voters in both languages at Vote411.org.
- Even though most candidate responses were available in both languages, other parts of the Guide needed to be translated. These include the sections that explain the contents of the Guide, the sections that explain early voting, mail-in voting, etc. Two of our team members sought grant money to help pay for having these parts of the Guide translated into Spanish. Even though our grant applications were rejected, LWVFC was able to pay a translator. As a result, for the first time, LWVFC offered a printed Voters' Guide in both English and Spanish.
- We distributed 1500 English Guides and 1000 Spanish Guides at community events, via county libraries, senior-living communities etc.
- A LWVFC member donated her time to serve as our graphic designer for the printed Guides and – as they have for many years – the Frederick News-Post printed our Guides for free and included the English Guide in their paper for their digital and print subscribers.

2024 VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN REPORT

In 2024, the League of Women Voters entertained a large Get Out the Vote campaign that encompassed many different types of efforts to engage voters.

During the election season, we continued our tradition of tabling at community events to encourage voters to join the LWVFC, but also to vote in the Primary and General elections. This year, volunteers stepped up to staff tables at the following events:

- Move Your Vote Forward – at Baker Park
- Frederick Pride
- Delta Sigma Theta Community Day
- In the Streets
- United Way Day of Action at the stadium
- The Hispanic Heritage Festival
- The Asian American Health Fair

- Brunswick Railroad Days

We had a comprehensive registration campaign in the Frederick County High Schools for the first time ever. Volunteers tabled during the lunch period shifts at each school. Twice. And they did not just register voters, they encouraged students to apply to become Election Judges for school credit and for pay! Volunteers reported a lot of interest at each school.

We ran voter education presentations including "Vote 101" and "Abolishing the Electoral College" at almost all Frederick County libraries. There were two presentations made at each of the libraries. We also tabled at each library at least two times throughout the period before the general election.

We assisted Hood College students conduct a National Registration Day event, as well as their annual Registration Week event.

We had 35 volunteers covering 130 events, contributing 644 hours of their time. We registered 303 voters. That might not seem like a lot, but we were not the only organization out there registering voters, and we were doing it an hour or two at a time, except at the community events. While registering voters we are also raising awareness of upcoming elections, answering questions about registration, helping potential voters know their rights, etc.

2024 VOTER FORUMS REPORT

A committee member attended the Board of Elections meetings and reported on important relevant information. The committee hosted virtual forums for District 6 and Frederick County Board of Education candidates. In the Primary, we hosted two candidate forums for the Board of Education, and 4 for District 6 Congressional Representative on YouTube live.

For the General election, we co-hosted a forum with the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for the Board of Education candidates. We then hosted in-person forums for both the Board of Education and the District 6 Congressional candidates at Hood College, as well as on You Tube Live. The District 6 Forum garnered a lot of press in the region. We formed a strong bond with the Hood College technology staff that should serve us well in the future. We secured deaf interpretation services for all three of the forums in the general election. Hood college students participated in asking the candidate questions at the forums at Hood College. One of those students, Margaret Ralston, is volunteering to assist us in gathering information for the 2025 local municipal elections.

XII. Proposed Changes to the Bylaws

The Board has proposed no changes to the Bylaws. If any member wishes to propose any change, they may do so by filing the proposed change and submitting it by email to Kate Jones, President, at axelkjz@msn.com by April 10, 2025, for addition to the Annual meeting workbook.

XIII. Proposed Local Program for the Coming Year

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE COMING YEAR
May 2025 - April 2026

The League of Women Voters is committed to the dual purposes of education and advocacy. Advocacy falls under four broad areas of public policy - Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy.

Action by the LWVFC is based on Positions (specific statements and guidelines) adopted by our League, by the LWVMD and/or by the LWVUS. Local League actions may also be based on LWVUS Principles (broad statements of beliefs). Separate from this process, the League engages in nonpartisan Voter Services activities.

(Find more info on LWVMD Positions at https://www.lwvmd.org/positions. Find more info on LWVUS Principles and Positions at https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf. Find more info on Voter Services at https://www.lwvmd.org/voter_service.)

VOTER SERVICES

►Continue to provide factual and unbiased information to citizens about the election process and about candidates in order to promote informed participation in elections.

►Continue to provide Poll Monitoring services for the Frederick County Board of Elections during the primary and general elections, including early voting.

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, responsive and accountable.

►Continue to chair the Nominating Committee for the Frederick County Ethics Commission, as specified in the Frederick County Ethics Law.
(https://frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1618/Ethics-Law)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

►Continue to monitor and support implementation of Frederick County's Livable Frederick Comprehensive Plan.
(https://frederickcountymd.gov/7977/Livable-Frederick-Planning-and-Design)

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

►Continue to Monitor the activities of the Frederick County Police Accountability Board.

►Continue Support the use of Ranked Choice Voting, also known as Instant Runoff Voting, by municipalities in Frederick County. Support the acquisition of voting equipment that accommodates RCV.

PROMOTE CIVIC EDUCATION IN FREDERICK SCHOOLS

►Develop *connections with the school system to get a program into the schools teaching children about political institutions, a citizen's role in supporting those institutions, and defending democracy.*
LWVUS Position: We support efforts to provide voters with enough information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues, and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information. The League has worked for the public's right to know and for broader public participation in government as a necessary component of decision-making at all levels of government since its founding.
LWVMD Position: Nothing directly on point.

See one type of program here, for context and development: Civics Curriculum Guide - FDR Presidential Library & Museum.

RESIST BOOK BANNING AT THE LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL

►**Pursue** *legislation to preventing government from banning books in schools, in our libraries, and in other venues.*

LWVUS Position: LWVUS also provided guidance to Leagues to use the Citizen Participation position together with the Individual Liberties position to oppose book bans in libraries and other public institutions. At the 2024 Convention, delegates passed a resolution that public libraries are essential for strong democracies and that the access to resources that they provide is a civil right.

LWVMD Position: Nothing directly on point.

Karen Paris had some experience with this in NJ. She says:
I know we are a blue state, but I also know every state is susceptible to Book Bans. I contacted someone I know who was instrumental in getting this legislation passed in New Jersey. Here is what she had to say.

We reached out to a state senator who we have a relationship with. Told him about librarians being harassed. Librarian put us in touch with NJ Assoc of School Librarians who in turn hooked us in with NJ Library Assoc, ACLU-NJ, NJ Education Association, AAPI NJ, Seik Coalition. There were other groups like LWVNJ working on this as well as some LGBTQ groups. Once we had a solid bill that the sponsor said was good to go we put out calls to action for our members to call their legislators to sign on as co-sponsors.

Sometimes calls or meetings can be organized as a group lobbying a legislator to sign on as a cosponsor.

The bill will be referred to committee, in our case the Senate Education Committee and the Assembly Education Committee. In many cases NJ bills go through the Senate first.

In February we were told what day it would be heard, we gathered about 30 speakers to tell their stories and make a case for the Freedom to Read Act. Unfortunately, the bill was pulled the day before.

There's A LOT of politics involved with controversial legislation

The Assembly took up the bill a few months later and it passed through committee and an Assembly floor vote. It was up to the Senate again. A big part was not giving up and being creative. Over the summer we sent out 500 specialty FTR postcards to the Senate President Scutari asking him to post the bill to committee. We'll never know for sure if that helped but the bill got posted when the legislature came back.

I had no idea this was such a laborious process, even more than Schoolhouse Rock's explanation of a bill!

We had to get speakers for the Senate Ed Committee with maybe 3 days notice.

It's a crazy process but super rewarding when you can help make it happen.

The Maryland Assembly, as of a few weeks ago, did not have any legislation like this on the list.

This may be timelier than we think. On February 23, MoveOn issued an email with this content:

> Last week, [Donald Trump} ordered schools on military bases or run by the military to remove from school shelves any books that discussed equity or discrimination.[1] One of the first books to be banned is called "Freckleface Strawberry," a children's book written by actress Julianne Moore that tells a story of a young girl learning to love her freckles. Yes, you read that correctly.

They also banned "No Truth Without Ruth," a children's book about the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg.[2]

Let's be prepared.

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

►**Work** with the LWVUS and LWVMD to ensure that the US Congress and MD General Assembly protect federal and state rule of law, defend the U.S. and MD State Constitutions, and rein in executive overreach at the national and state levels.
LWVUS Position: **Congress.** Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability, effective performance, and transparency. **The Presidency.** Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution
LWVMD Position: Supports (in accordance with the LWVUS Principles and positions) legislation and administrative action which will make government more responsive and accountable to the voters, such as open meetings, accessibility of records to the public, and a code of ethics for government office holders and officials.

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE INTERSTATE COMPACT

►**Work** with the LWVUS and LWVMD to promote the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, abolish the Electoral College, and secure the right of "one person, one vote."
LWVUS Position: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the President until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system — from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with enough information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues, and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.
LWVMD Position: If a majority of votes is required to win an election, Ranked Choice Voting (instant runoff) is the preferred method of determining such a majority. (There was no consensus on using a separate Run-off Elections to determine a majority.)
Supports the option to use Instant Runoff Voting (IRV): (2014)

1. for single-seat or executive office elections, both at the state and county and local level. This would require the winner to receive a majority of the votes cast.
2. to fill vacancies in any vacancies in any state or county offices, when special elections are held, instead of conducting both special political party primaries and a special general election.

NONCITIZEN RESIDENT VOTING IN MARYLAND

►**Study** the extension of the right for noncitizens to vote in local and state elections. Nikki Tyree requested that a local LWV propose such a study, so we are discussing whether we want to do so at the Annual meeting
LWVUS Position: There is no direct position on this issue. However: The LWVUS believes in representative government. The League ***supports electoral systems that elect policy making bodies — legislatures, councils, commissions, and boards — that proportionally reflect the people they represent***. We support systems that inhibit political manipulation (e.g., gerrymandering). The LWVUS ***supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative electoral methods, as well as supporting state election laws allowing for***

more options at both the state and local levels. With the adoption of any electoral system, the League believes that education of the voting public is important and funding for startup and voter education should be available. We encourage a concerted voter education process.
About Immigration, the LWVUS states: immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business, and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the United States on student visas. All people should receive fair treatment under the law.
LWVMD Position: Action to assure an election system that is representative, feasible to implement and increases voter participation, as well as equitable, accessible, fiscally responsible, accountable and enforceable.

XIV. Report of Nominating Committee and Election of Officers

(Terms of office begin May 1, 2025)

OFFICERS (2-year term)
Secretary Rosanne Roe

DIRECTORS, ELECTED (2-year term)
George Carroll
Norma Diaz-Mayoral
Jill Griffith
Ellen West

DIRECTORS, APPOINTED (1-year term)
Suzanne Beall
Peggy Durbin
Mary Sue Krause
Karen Paris
Barbara Schectman

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (1-year term)
Linda Norris (chair)
Suzy Bailey
Margaret Hindman

XV Directions to the Board

Members of LWVFC are invited to give guidance to their newly elected Board members to complete their work in the coming year.

XVI. Adjournment

Next Board Meeting: Monday May 19, 2025