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## LEAGUE IN A TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has begun a staged reopening, and Lexington's Town Manager has appointed a task force to lay out a plan and timetable for reopening public buildings in our Town. However, for the immediate future, League activities will continue to be conducted remotely..

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## UPCOMING IN THE LEXINGTON LEAGUE

[June 2020 First Friday Forum:](#)  
[Lexington's Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic:](#)  
[Helping Our Neighbors - Information You Need Now](#)

On Friday, June 5, 2020, at 9:30 am, Melissa Interest, LICSW, Lexington Director of Human Services, will host a panel discussion on Lexington's responses to essential human needs during the current pandemic. The panelists include: Usha Thakrar, Lexington Interfaith Food Pantry; Johnny Cole, Director of Equity and Student Supports, Lexington Public Schools; and Ragini Pathak, chapter leader in the Lexington Neighbor Brigade. They will describe available resources and strategies for reaching local residents despite social distancing and the Governor's advisory to stay at home.

The Forum will take place on Zoom. For information about how to use Zoom for remote participation, contact Lisah Rhodes at [lwwlexington@gmail.com](mailto:lwwlexington@gmail.com) in advance of the meeting. For information on how to join this webinar, see the instructions on the last page of this bulletin.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization dedicated to the principle of self-government. The League works to promote informed and active participation of citizens in government. Its programs are free and open to all. For more information contact Convenor Margaret Coppe at [mecoppe@gmail.com](mailto:mecoppe@gmail.com).

## Update on Lexington Events for the 100th Anniversary Year

\* The physical re-opening date of Cary Memorial Library remains uncertain, so the Lexington League's presentation on League History and Women's Suffrage on the **Cary Memorial Library "Idea Wall"** will be deferred .

\* However, the Library has arranged for virtual presentation of scheduled speakers of particular interest to League members and **the Lexington League will be co-sponsoring the following events:**

\* **> Victoria A. Budson:** "The Essential Role of Women in Politics." Virginia Budson is the founder and Executive Director of the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. She originated a training program which prepares women to run for public office and has trained graduate students from across the world. Institutions in many countries consult her training methodology to increase gender equity in their political leadership. Ms. Budson has provided consulting to the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of State, the White House Council on Women and Girls, and the U.S. Military, among others.

This presentation, co-sponsored by the Lexington League and the Cary Library Foundation, will compare the level of participation of women and girls in the political process in the United States with that in other nations, and address the serious ramifications when women do not have "a seat at the table."

The online program is scheduled for **Thursday, July 23, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**, and requires advance registration, as space is limited. The Library will send out a program link by email on July 22. For more information contact [caryprograms@minlit.net](mailto:caryprograms@minlit.net).

\* **Tina Cassidy:** "Mr. President, How Long Must We Wait? Alice Paul, Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the Right to Vote" Ms. Cassidy, a former reporter for the Boston Globe, is the author of a number of books on history and politics. Her talk is scheduled for **Tuesday, July 28**.

\* **Sheryl Faye:** "Susan B. Anthony - Failure is Impossible" In this one-woman performance, Ms. Faye presents one of the most prominent figures in the women's suffrage movement who fought for passage of the 19th Amendment and other rights for women.. This performance is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 5**.

Lexington League First Friday Forums will resume in October, 2020.

## Of Interest

The Waltham League of Women Voters recently hosted Dan Kennedy, an Associate Professor at Northeastern University and a nationally known media commentator and panelist on WGBH's "Beat the Press." Professor Kennedy teaches news reporting, opinion writing, media ethics and other journalism courses, with an emphasis on how technology is changing the business of news. He has been published in *The Washington Post* and *The Boston Globe*, among other publications.

Professor Kennedy shared his thoughts on "fake news" via a Zoom webinar with Waltham League members. The program is free and unrestricted and you can view it on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ALcOXYQACB0>.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

### LWVMA COUNCIL, JUNE 13, 2020

MIT Professor Charles Stewart will be the keynote speaker for our Council 2020 virtual meeting [Saturday, June 13](#). He will bring us an update on elections during a pandemic, highlighting what we need to do in the next five months and what we should do in the next five years.

Program: The session will begin at [10 a.m. Saturday, June 13](#), with a brief business meeting where members will elect Officers and Directors, receive a financial update on LWVMA, and hear from our Executive Director about some of the ways LWVMA is working during these strange times. Professor Stewart's presentation will follow the business meeting, beginning around 10:30 a.m.

Delegates and Registration: Registration is now open for Council 2020 via Zoom webinar. Each local League is allowed to name an allotted number of voting delegates which correspond to membership numbers as of February 1, 2020. Lexington will have two voting delegates, but all members are welcome to attend Council as observers. You can register on the LWVMA website at [lwwma.org/?s=Council+2020](http://lwwma.org/?s=Council+2020).

Local League Gifts: In a typical year the LWVMA gratefully receives donations from local Leagues at Council. With the League's major fundraiser postponed from this spring, such gifts are especially welcome. Please consider a donation, perhaps in honor or in memory of a special person in our League in this time of stress.

## LWVMA 100th Anniversary Webinar



Historian and author Barbara Berenson will be presenting *After Suffrage: The Campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment, 1920 - 2020*. Her talk will be on [Tuesday, June 2, at 7 pm](#). Registration is required and limited to 500 people. Register at [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_DQwPMmzhSbevEov7WeUv0g](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_DQwPMmzhSbevEov7WeUv0g). (Copy here and paste it into your browser address.)

## LWVMA Birthday Gala Rescheduled to December

The festive gala to celebrate LWVMA's 100th birthday, originally scheduled for May 31, will now be held Sunday, Dec. 13. Mark your calendars! There will be a brunch at the [Sheraton Four Points Hotel in Norwood, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm](#). The featured speaker will be Dr. Danielle Allen, James Bryant Conant University Professor at Harvard University. Professor Allen is widely known for her work on justice and citizenship in ancient Athens and modern America, and for her book *Cuz: An American Tragedy*, detailing the story of her cousin and the criminal justice system

## Massachusetts Elections Update

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, LWVMA, with our partners in the Election Modernization Coalition (EMC), were hard at work advocating for passage of the Election Day Registration (EDR) legislation that was making its way through the Massachusetts legislature. This bill, if passed, would allow citizens to register or update their registration on Election Day and then vote. On February 6, LWVMA marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of the League with an EDR "Day of Action" at the State House.

Currently, LWVMA and the EMC have shifted our focus from Election Day Registration to safeguarding our fall elections. We are asking the legislature to send all registered voters a ballot for the November general election. A bill, [H.4737](#), calls for ballots to be mailed to all voters, with prepaid return postage, at least 19 days before the Nov. 3 election. Ballots will be returned to city or town election offices, which would also install secure drop boxes where voters could deposit ballots. While we hope the COVID-19 virus will have abated by fall, we must plan to conduct our elections as if it has not. [See the calls to action below.](#)

# TIME TO ACT



## I. Urge Your Legislators to Support Vote by Mail Election Bill

The time is now to urge your legislators to support **Vote By Mail (VBM)**. Please email your state Senator and Representative and ask them to support **H.4737** (formerly HD.5075) - the bill that LWVMA and our partners in the Election Modernization Coalition have filed. This bill would send all registered voters a ballot for the November general election.

Email is better than phone calls or letters while legislators are working remotely. You can find phone numbers, email and office addresses on the legislature's webpage for your Senator and Representative at to [www.malegislature.gov](http://www.malegislature.gov).

Massachusetts voters' ability to safely cast a ballot in November is in jeopardy. Our election system is not set up for a huge surge of absentee ballots. Overworked and under-resourced local election officials, who do everything by hand, will not be able to keep up. As we've seen in other states, thousands of Massachusetts voters may not get the ballots they request. While in-person voting will still be an option, mailing all registered voters a ballot, with no application required and a prepaid return envelope, will ensure that everyone can safely vote. The bill requires the Secretary of the Commonwealth of the Commonwealth to adopt regulations to safeguard the health of voters and election workers.

**TIMING IS CRITICAL** - the legislature must act now for systems to be in place for the Sept. 1 primary election and the Nov. 3 general election. The primary election is less than 100 days away. Other provisions of the bill include:

- Expanding early voting in person to two weeks before the Sept. 1 state primary election and three weeks before the Nov. 3 election;
- Cutting the pre-election deadline to register to vote in the two elections from the current 20 days to 10 days;
- Creating an online portal for voters to apply for absentee ballots;
- Establishing that concern about COVID-19 qualifies as a "physical disability" and permits any concerned voter to vote by absentee ballot;
- Permitting local election officials to scan absentee and early voting ballots in their offices before election day, rather than deliver them to individual polling places to be counted on election day; no results will be determined or announced before polls close.

The Election Modernization Coalition includes LWVMA, Common Cause, ACLU Massachusetts, MassVOTE, MassPIRG, Massachusetts Voter Table, and Lawyers for Civil Rights. For more information and access to the League's testimony on this bill, contact Nancy Brumback at [nancy.brumback@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.brumback@gmail.com).

## II. Sign the Petition to Put Ranked Choice Voting on November Ballot

For Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) to be on the ballot November 3, [Voter Choice for Massachusetts](#), the RCV campaign, must submit a second round of 13,374 valid signatures by June 17. The Supreme Judicial Court has ruled that, given the difficulty of collecting signatures in person during this pandemic, voters can sign the petition electronically. The campaign kicked off the signature drive May 6 and needs thousands of registered voters to [sign the RCV petition](#) electronically from home.

If you did not sign the RCV petition in the fall or aren't sure whether you did, please take a minute to sign the RCV petition right now at [sign.voterchoice2020.org](https://sign.voterchoice2020.org). When you get to the actual petition, you sign your name using either your touch screen, the trackpad on a laptop, or your mouse. After you create your signature, click "Adopt and Sign" and it will be added to the petition document.

Then share this link with your friends and family--[sign.voterchoice2020.org](https://sign.voterchoice2020.org)--on Facebook or via email. Encourage them to sign the petition too and to pass the link along to their friends.

If you want to do more and would like to get involved to help safely gather signatures from your friends and neighbors, the campaign has the tools and training to support you. Please contact Brian Bass, organizing director for the RCV campaign, at [brian@voterchoice2020.org](mailto:brian@voterchoice2020.org).

Volunteers from Voter Choice for Massachusetts made history last fall when they submitted 111,000 certified signatures to the Secretary of the Commonwealth; the most ever by a Massachusetts ballot initiative campaign. Now we need to get 13,374 more from people who didn't sign the first time.

## League Advocacy on Gun Violence

Many things have come to a standstill during the pandemic. Gun violence isn't one of them.

The LWVMA encourages our members to join the [Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence](#) for a VIRTUAL Advocacy Day 2020 on Tuesday, June 2, from 11:30-1:00 PM via Zoom. There will be a 30-minute speaking program followed by breakout sessions by geographic region. The breakout sessions will bring advocates and constituents together with their legislators to share stories and outline action steps to decrease gun violence in our communities. All the tools and talking points you need beforehand to contact legislators will be provided. Highlighted priorities are: [An Act Relative to Crime Gun Data Analysis and Reporting](#) and [SSYI: Safe and Secure Youth Initiatives](#). Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZclcuYrQD0uHtfmWgtUCa14XNLxdqwhbLpD>

## 2020 Census - Still Counting

Outreach to ensure a complete Census count in Massachusetts continues. The Census Bureau plans to restart field operations on June 1 and has extended the enumeration deadline to October 31.

The League is continuing to support outreach efforts in hard-to-count communities throughout Massachusetts. The following areas in Massachusetts are lagging in the count: the Cape and Islands; Western Massachusetts; and cities, such as Boston, Chelsea, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Medford, Fall River, Springfield, Worcester, Fall River, and New Bedford. The Census Bureau's interactive Response Rate Map: indicates that the current response rate for Middlesex County is 68.8%. (<https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html>)

Here are some ways that individual League members can help:

- Post social media messages encouraging everyone to complete their census form. LWVMA and LWVUS regularly post messages you can share or repost.
- Write a letter to your local newspaper on the importance of the census.

Volunteer to Phone Bank to Increase the Count. MassCounts will continue to conduct phone banks to call residents of census tracts with the lowest self-response rates through the end of June, every Tuesday from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, Thursday from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm and Saturday from 1:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please sign up to join a virtual phone bank. You'll need a computer and a cell phone. A 15-20-minute training and a script are provided. Please note you need to sign up for each day you would like to phone bank. To register contact Judy Zaunbrecher at [jzaunbrecher@lwwma.org](mailto:jzaunbrecher@lwwma.org).

### PROGRAMS CELEBRATING LOCAL WOMEN

Presented monthly by Freedom's Way National Heritage Association.

June 23 – Marion Stoddart – Groton, MA (*Partner: Nashua River Watershed Association*)

Founder of the Nashua River Watershed Association and recipient of the UN Environmental Programme's Global 500 Award, [Marion Stoddart](#) spearheaded efforts to clean up the Nashua River from over a century of industrial pollution. Stoddart's action, which was aided by her experience with the League of Women Voters, resulted in part of the Nashua River and its tributaries receiving the National Wild and Scenic designation in 2019.

\* **FUTURE PROGRAMS:** For information on times and locations and to register to attend, go to [FreedomWay.org/Programs/Connecting-Communities-Walks-Talks](https://FreedomWay.org/Programs/Connecting-Communities-Walks-Talks).

July 18 – Elizabeth Orton Jones – Mason, NH (*Partners: Mason Historical Society, Mason Public Library*)

August 22 – Hazel MacKaye – Shirley, MA (*Partners: Shirley Historical Society, Shirley Meeting House*)

September 26 – Louisa May Alcott, Harriett Lothrop, Margaret Lothrop - Concord, MA (*Partners: Minute Man National Historical Park (National Park Service), Friends of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery*)

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

## LWVUS NATIONAL CONVENTION, June 25-28, 2020

The League of Women Voters' 54th National Convention is still scheduled to be held on June 25-28, 2020, as an on-line event. LWVUS is pleased to announce that our keynote speaker will be CBS Evening News Anchor Nora O'Donnell.



Business sessions will be held June 25-27, with consideration for all time zones involved. There will be a full plenary session, and the Parliamentarian is working to insure compliance with all League governance requirements, including those around registered delegates, quorums and participation procedure. Delegates will receive full instructions in advance.

All current information is posted on [lww.org/2020convention](https://lww.org/2020convention), including registration instructions, the schedule at a glance, resources for delegates and the resolution and voting process.

**Note on registration:** Please make sure you complete both parts of the registration process. After completing step one and paying for your registration, you will receive access to register for the Zoom webinars through which Convention will be hosted. It is important to click through and register on those links in order to access the Convention sessions.

### Tech & Communications Webinar Recording: PPFM Messaging

The LWV May Technology & Communications Webinar on the People Powered Fair Maps campaign messaging is now available as a recording. Find a link to watch the recording as well as links to all the resources referenced during the presentation on the [lww.org](https://lww.org) at the [League Management Site](#).

## LWVUS ADVOCACY

### Ask Congress to Fund Election Needs

LWVUS is working to ensure elections and equality are prioritized as Congress drafts stimulus bills for COVID relief. The three provisions the League is asking for are:

- Ensure that \$4 billion in election funding is included to help states to make the remaining primaries and the November general election safe for all to participate.
- Ensure that all families and individuals receive aid from the government, regardless of their immigration or tax status.
- Ensure that Washington D.C. is treated like a state and not a territory in funding distribution.

### LWVUS Joins Request to Congress for Civic Education Funding

The LWVUS has joined organizations on a letter to Congress requesting \$40,000,000 for one-time competitive grants to nonpartisan nonprofit civic education program providers. They must have a track record of successfully providing effective civic education programming to schools to meet the remote teaching needs of K-12 schools and teachers, the homeschooling needs of parents and students, and for meaningful student-centered civic learning. See [lww.org](http://lww.org) for more details.

### LWVUS Urges Congress to Include Funding for Developing Countries in Next Stimulus Bill

LWVUS has joined 65 organizations urging Congress to include [HR 6851](#), legislation to require each U.S. Executive Director at an international financial institution to take certain actions in support of the global response to COVID-19. Details of this and other requests related to the next COVID 19 stimulus bill can be found on [lww.org](http://lww.org).

### National Voter Registration Day, September 22, 2020

Voter registration is more important than ever this year, and the LWVUS will once again be a premiere partner for National Voter Registration Day, September 22, 2020. Since 2012, hundreds of Leagues have participated in this annual celebration of voter registration, hosting thousands of voter registration events and promoting online registration options on [VOTE411](#). A big voter registration push relatively early in the cycle is crucial to ensuring that all Americans have an opportunity to take advantage of expanded options to vote in a safe way. And it's also critical to helping election officials across the country in their efforts to offer these options to all eligible voters.

## SAVE THE DATE

June 2, 2020	MA Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence	11:30 am Online
June 2, 2020	LWVMA Webinar: Campaign for the ERA	7:00 pm Online
June 5, 2020	LWV Lexington First Friday: Pandemic	9:30 am Online
June 13, 2020	LWVMA Council	10:00 am Online
June 25-28, 2020	LWV National Convention	Online
July 23, 2020	Cary Library lecture: Victoria Budson	Online
July 28, 2020	Cary Library lecture: Tina Cassidy on Alice Paul	Online
August 5, 2020	Cary Library lecture: Sheryl Faye on Susan B. Anthony	Online
September 1, 2020	Massachusetts Primary	
September 22, 2020	National Voter Registration Day	
November 3, 2020	National Presidential and Congressional Election	
December 13, 2020	LWVMA 100th Birthday Gala	1:00-3:00 pm

### Instructions on How to Join the June First Friday Forum on Zoom

When: Jun 5, 2020 09:30 Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Topic: First Friday: COVID-19 Helping Our Neighbors

Please click the link below to join the webinar:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89059567445>

Or iPhone one-tap :

US: +13126266799,,89059567445# or +16465588656,,89059567445#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248  
7799 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 890 5956 7445

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2019--2020**

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**We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the July 2020 LWV LEXINGTON Bulletin, please send it to Wendy Manz at [wendy\\_manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy_manz@yahoo.com) prior to June 26.**