

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONCORD-CARLISLE

# BULLETIN

LWVCC Website: [www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org); LWVCC telephone #: (978) 254-1598

January 2012

P.O. Box 34 Concord, Massachusetts 01742-0034

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## CALENDAR

### JANUARY

- 22 Sun Book Signing, Concord Book Shop, Jeff Clements' *Corporations are NOT People* 3-4:00 pm
- 24 Tues LWVSudbury Program "For Sale: Money & Elections after *Citizens United* 7:30 pm
- 25 Wed LWVCC Book Group, Concord Library, Trustees Room 10:00-11:30 am

### FEBRUARY

- 1 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 41 Canterbury Ct. Carlisle (Cindy Nock) 9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
- 1 Wed LWVCC National Program Planning Meeting, 41 Canterbury Ct, Carlisle 12:00 noon-1:30 pm  
Or 216 Garfield Rd, (Nancy Cronin) 7:30-9:00 pm
- 12 Sun LWVCC Candidates Forum, Town House 2-4:00 pm
- 15 Wed Last day to register to vote in March 6 Presidential Primary election
- 22 Wed LWVCC ESC meeting, 100 Newbury Ct. #208 (Anita Barker) 8:30-9:30 am
- 27 Mon Carlisle Town Caucus, Carlisle Town Hall 7 pm
- 29 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, if needed 9 coffee, 9:30 mtg

### MARCH

- 6 Tues Presidential Primary Election & Concord Town Election polls open 7 am – 8 pm
- 7 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 282 East Riding Lane Carlisle (Barbara Lewis) 9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
- 14 Wed LWVCC Open Meeting, topic TBA
- 21 Wed LWVCC ESC mtg, 100 Newbury Ct. #208 (Anita Barker) 8:30-9:30 am
- 28 Wed LWVCC Book Group, Concord Library, Trustees Room 10:00-11:30 am

### APRIL

- 4 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 384 Hayward Mills Rd, (Louise Haldeman) 9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
- 18 Wed LWVCC ESC meeting, 100 Newbury Ct. #208 (Anita Barker) 8:30-9:30 am
- 23 Mon Concord Town Meeting, CCHS 7 pm
- 30 Mon Carlisle Town Meeting

### MAY

- 17 Thurs LWVCC Campaign Finance Program: Tom Ashbrook, CCHS TBA  
*Members are invited to attend monthly Board meetings.  
Please contact Cindy or Paula if you would like to attend any of them.*

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization of men and women formed in 1920 and dedicated to the principles of self government established by the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

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# EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

Cindy Nock and Paula Vandever, Co-Presidents

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January 2012

Dear League Friends,

We hope you all enjoyed the holidays and are preparing for an eventful and successful new year. We have many activities set in motion as we continue our efforts to make democracy work. We hope you enjoyed the Winter Membership Breakfast early this month in which a panel of speakers addressed local food systems in Concord and Carlisle. We filled the room to capacity.

January 21, 2012 is the second anniversary of the SCOTUS decision on *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. Campaign finance reform continues to be a major passion of the League. The "Follow the Money Committee" of the LWVCC has created a program which will enable local Leagues across the state to educate and gather opinions on how to address the ramifications of unlimited, undisclosed money in politics. We are particularly excited about the news that Tom Ashbrook, host of WBUR's On Point, has agreed to moderate a panel discussion on this issue, May 17<sup>th</sup>, at CCHS in Concord. Be sure to save the date. The LWVMA State Council this year, May 5<sup>th</sup>, will focus on money in politics and voter service. And the LWVCC has reserved rooms to hold a workshop and a caucus at the LWVUS National Convention, June 8 - 12. Our focus there will be to explore this issue and consider possible options.

The time for LWVUS National Program Planning is approaching. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, we will hold two meetings to gather opinions and send recommendations to the National League. Would you like to see a new study, a review or a concurrence with another League's Position regarding a new issue that you believe we should address? If so, let us know as soon as possible. One question being raised by many local Leagues is: Does the LWVUS Position on campaign finance reform need to be broadened to include the possibility of an Amendment to the U.S. Constitution to remove personhood from corporations? Please be sure to attend one of the meetings mentioned in this Bulletin.

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, we will hold "Concord's Candidate Forum" where attendees will be able to meet and ask questions of those seeking office in Concord. The only contested office is the Housing Authority and we hope you will attend to learn about the people willing to serve us.

A committee is forming to run the Privatization Study and is described further in this Bulletin. If you would like to join the committee please contact Paula Vandever. The Sustainability Committee is working on a definition of Sustainability and guidelines to present at Annual Meeting. New committee members are still welcome and should contact Cindy Nock.

For information about the League's Positions on issues visit the websites at LWVCC.org, LWVMA.org and LWV.org. They have all been recently updated to be more user friendly! Keep informed and keep us informed about what you like or dislike about the websites.

Sincerely,

Cindy Nock and Paula Vandever, Co-Presidents

## LWVCC MEMBER NEWS

An update to the Membership Directory will be coming in February. If you have made any changes to your contact information (i.e., address, e-mail address, phone number) since renewing your membership, please contact Dee Ortner immediately at 617-379-2749 or [membership@lhwcc.org](mailto:membership@lhwcc.org) with the information. Thank you!

Our Membership drive is coming to closure, yet several 'renewals' have not been received. If you haven't done so as yet, please help the League by renewing your membership today. We'd love to hear from you!

*Dee Ortner, Membership chair  
Committee: Nancy Beeuwkes, Mary Chapman, Cindy Collen, Irmi Doane, & Barbara Lewis*

## NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING ON FEBRUARY 1<sup>st</sup>

Every two years local Leagues take part in grass roots planning for the LWVUS biennial program. The development of national program is a three-part process composed of planning, study, and consensus by the local Leagues, followed by National, State and local League advocacy. Local Leagues have the option of recommending one new study, or one review and update of a current position, or national concurrence with a previous state or local position, or a recommendation of no additions to the current national program.

LWVCC members will gather at the home of Cindy Nock, 14 Canterbury Ct, Carlisle, at 12 noon on Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> to suggest a new area of

study or a review of one of the current national positions. Bring a brown bag lunch if you wish. For members' convenience, an evening meeting will also be held at 7:30 PM on the same day at the home of Nancy Cronin, 216 Garfield Road, Concord.

The current LWVUS program includes topics which local Leagues have studied and on which they have jointly reached consensus. All Leagues can use the national positions for advocacy and action. The topics covered fall under these general headings: Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy. They are compiled in detail in the LWVUS document titled "Impact on Issues." The LWVCC used LWVUS Natural Resources positions on water, food, energy and waste management as the basis for our "Life in the Balance" forums in 2009 and 2010.

We recommend that before coming to the February 1<sup>st</sup> meeting you review our national positions by going to the LWVUS website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), then clicking on 'Members', and searching for "Impact on Issues."

Please join with other LWVCC members to help develop our recommendations for the League's national program. For more information about the February 1<sup>st</sup> meetings, you can contact Nancy Cronin at [National@lhwcc.org](mailto:National@lhwcc.org) or 978-369-5399.

*Nancy Cronin, National Issues Chair*

# LWV URGES PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Erin Pastuszenski, Voters Service Concord & Barbara Lewis, Voters Service Carlisle

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## RUNNING FOR OFFICE

Contested elections engage voters in comparing candidates and their positions. The result is a more informed electorate and higher turnout at the polls. The League of Women Voters believes that having more than one person run for an office strengthens our democracy.

To encourage more citizens to consider running for office, LWVCC held its first Running for Office workshop on December 1, 2011. With the Concord Town Caucus set for January 9, and the local election scheduled for March 6 (coinciding with the Massachusetts Presidential Primary), we wanted to help candidates learn the basics and get comfortable with the idea of tossing their hats in the ring in 2012.

The workshop panelists were Moderator Eric Van Loon, Selectman Carmin Reiss, School Committee member Peter Fischelis, and Housing Authority Commissioner K.C. Winslow. Each panelist gave personal statements about their background, how they came to run, and their experiences campaigning and holding office. All expressed pleasure with the process and enjoyment in learning more about the town.

Concord Town Clerk Anita Tekle announced that the local offices up for election on March 6 are Town Moderator (one-year term), Board of Selectmen (two seats, three-year term), School Committee (two seats, three-year term), and Housing Authority (one seat, five-year term). Tekle explained that

candidates for the open offices can be nominated at the Town Caucus which is open to all Concord voters. Caucus attendees may place a candidate's name in nomination by giving a brief speech in support of the candidate. The nomination must be seconded, and the caucus then votes to nominate up to two people for each open office.

Town Clerk Tekle stated that any candidate raising or spending money must follow the Massachusetts campaign finance laws by forming a campaign committee and filing the required reports. She offered help with the election process to anyone planning to run for office.

Panelists also mentioned that candidates can reach voters through coverage in the *Concord Journal* and the online Concord Patch (<http://concord.patch.com>) and by participating in the annual Candidates Forum sponsored by LWVCC scheduled for Sunday, February 12. LWVCC has also published a comprehensive guide to running for office. "Getting Elected in Concord" is available at the Town Clerk's office and on the LWVCC website ([www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org)).

We thank all of the LWVCC members who helped us plan and present the workshop or who attended, including LWVCC members Anita Barker, Nancy Beeuwkes, Nancy Cronin, Ardis Bordman, Kathleen Elcox, Dee Ortnier, Julie Rohwein and Paula Vandever.

## **SERVING IN APPOINTED POSITIONS**

For those who wish to be considered for the many appointed positions on boards and committees in Concord, please visit the Town's Vacancies/Greencard page at [http://www.concordma.gov/Pages/ConcordMA\\_BOS/vacancies](http://www.concordma.gov/Pages/ConcordMA_BOS/vacancies). Download a Green Card there or pick one up at the Concord Town House.

As stated on the Town's website: "The Town of Concord depends upon the immense talent pool possessed by our citizens and we are always seeking interested townspeople to serve on citizen boards and committees, and also to carry out short-term projects. If you are willing to serve your Town on a voluntary basis and desire to participate in shaping the Town's future, please indicate your interest by filling out a 'Green Card'. Green cards are short forms for listing your areas of interest and any skills relevant to committee or project participation."

For more information contact [VoterService@lwgcc.org](mailto:VoterService@lwgcc.org) or call LWVCC at 978-254-1598.

## **CONCORD CANDIDATES FORUM Sunday, February 12, 2:00-4:00 p.m.**

Please join us for the LWVCC's Concord Candidates Forum on Sunday, February 12, 2012, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Town House Hearing Room, 22 Monument Square. (Snow date is February 26.) Our forum moderator will be Jo-Ann Berry of the LWV-Acton Area. The candidates will answer questions from the League of Women Voters and audience members.

Attend the forum to learn more about the candidates running for Concord Town Moderator, Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Housing Authority, so you can cast an informed vote at the Concord Town Election on Tuesday, March 6. March 6 is also the date for the Massachusetts Presidential Primary. We expect a good turnout of voters and high interest in the outcome of all of the races on the ballot that day.

The last day to register to vote in the March 6 election or change party affiliation for the primary is Wednesday, February 15. Contact LWVCC or the Concord Town Clerk (978-318-3080) about registering or updating your registration.

LWVCC plans to record the February 12<sup>th</sup> Candidates Forum for rebroadcast on local cable access television (CCTV channel 8) and for online viewing as Video on Demand at [www.concordtv.org](http://www.concordtv.org). We also plan to collaborate on a Voter Guide to be published in the *Concord Journal* before Election Day. Also watch our website ([www.lwgcc.org](http://www.lwgcc.org)) for election information.

## **VOTER SERVICE IN CONCORD AND CARLISLE**

Keeping voters in our towns informed and reminded of all the information they need to fully participate in elections and town meetings is an ongoing effort. A successful public workshop on Running for Office in Concord was held on December 1, at which five town officials participated.

Submitting vital information to the local papers helps keep citizens aware of deadlines and dates of meetings and events, as well as reminding readers of the work of the League.

A new undertaking this year has been a monthly conference call for all Voter Service Chairs in Massachusetts. This is run by Nancy Brumback of Sudbury League, a Director on the LWVMA Board, and Stefani Traina and Jo-Ann Berry, LWVMA Citizen Education Committee Co-Chairs. Topics that have been covered this year include communications with the public and the election information initiative called Vote411.

This month we will be discussing running successful Candidates Nights (or in our case, afternoons). There will be a wide ranging list of subjects that include effective task lists, finding moderators, 'empty chair' situations, and more. Time will also be given to talking about the Registering High School Students to Vote Week coming up and a search for a catchy slogan. If you have any ideas please let us know.

Helpful documents that are being made available to us are sample scripts, timing schedules, procedures, candidate agreement letter and broadcast waiver, moderator tips, press release tips and an LWVMA voter service guide. Imagine the time and valuable expertise that has been invested to create this wonderful resource.

What a busy year ahead for all involved League members. Joining in can be just as much a commitment as you are able to give, and very rewarding. Contact either Erin or Barbara if you would like to help out. The assistance and the fellowship is always welcomed.

*Erin Pastuszewski*  
*Voter Service, Concord*  
*Barbara Lewis*  
*Voter Service, Carlisle*

## **IMPORTANT VOTER DATES**

### Carlisle Dates

Caucus – Monday, Feb 27, 7pm  
Carlisle Town Hall  
Presidential Primary – March 6  
Town Meeting - Monday, April 30  
Town Elections – Tuesday, May 8

### Concord Dates

Candidates Forum – Sunday, Feb. 12,  
Town House, 2 – 4 pm  
Town Elections (and National  
Presidential Primary) – March 6  
Town Meeting – April 23 and on.

### **LWVCC BOOK GROUP**

The next meeting of the LWVCC Book Group will be on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 in the Trustees Room of the Concord Public Library from 10:00 am – 11:30 am. The book that we will discuss is *The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East* by David Hirst. This book's third edition was issued in 2003 and has been updated to include events that occurred at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This book is described as a “classic, myth-breaking general history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hirst, former Middle East correspondent of the Guardian, traces the origins of the conflict back to the 1880s to show how Arab violence, although often cruel and fanatical, is a response to the challenge of repeated aggression. [The book] is an absorbing, potentially controversial, history of the Middle Eastern conflict that is indispensable to anyone with an interest in world politics and by partisans of both sides.”

The LWVCC Book Group meets five times a year to discuss nonfiction books that focus on national and international issues and historical perspectives. All League members and Concord and Carlisle residents are invited to participate. All are welcome to attend and participate in the discussion.

*Anne Hayden & Ginny Lamere  
LWVCC Book Group Co-Chairs*

### **CONCORD BOOKSHOP EVENT - CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOOK BY CONCORD AUTHOR**

January 22nd at 3:00pm - please plan to attend a book discussion and signing of Jeff Clements' (a League member) new book Corporations Are NOT People. Jeff spoke to the League at our Annual Breakfast (January 2010) right before the Supreme Court decision on the *Citizens United v. FEC* case. At that time he articulated the concerns posed by the financing of political election campaigns should the Court decide in favor of Citizens United. The decision was 5-4 in favor of Citizens United and this is the first election where we will see the consequences of that decision.

Jeff Clements will speak about this case, how political parties and other organizations are handling the change, and what options are available to us - the voter - both now and in the future.

As a public service to the community, the League will have a table at this function to encourage others to join the LWVCC and become more informed and involved. Also, we'll have voter registration information and sign-up sheets to attend League discussion groups sponsored by our Campaign Finance Committee. We hope you can join us at The Concord Bookshop!

*Dee Ortner, FT\$ Committee*

### **FOR SALE: MONEY AND ELECTIONS AFTER *CITIZENS UNITED***

LWVCC Sudbury program  
Tuesday, January 24, 2012  
7:30 pm  
Ephraim Curtis Middle School  
22 Pratts Mill Rd, Sudbury  
Free and open to the public.

# LWVCC ANNUAL BREAKFAST

## “FOOD – Community Action”

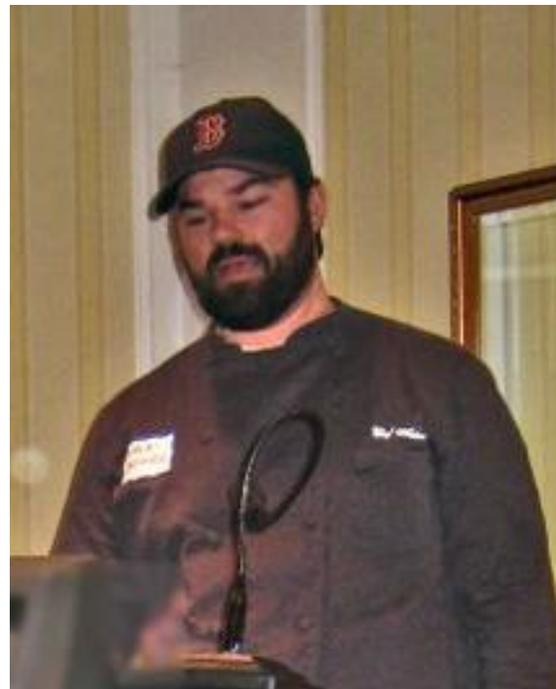
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The weather was beautiful and the turnout was grand as 59 Leaguers and guests enjoyed a fresh start to the second half of our League year. January always signifies new beginnings and what better way to start than with a discussion about FOOD. No, we didn't talk about calories and diets or - heaven forbid - giving up sweets! Instead, we indulged in a discussion of all that is positive and forward-thinking about our community regarding the food chain, that is *food production* > *consumption* > *waste management*.



Steve Verrill needs no introduction. He, his wife and daughter have a *food production* business that is so popular that the parking lot is always crowded. As our first speaker Steve talked about the changes in farming practices over the

years and about their experience in shifting from a dairy farm (Guernsey cows supply rich, flavorful milk) to a produce grower. He had the audience laughing about the early days and pricing of pick-your-own veggies. Steve mentioned the summer program for children and the challenges his business faces with staffing and regulations. Steve is in discussions with our local school district on supplying fresh produce to meet their needs. Which brings us to our second speaker...



“Chef Alden” Cadwell, Food Services Director for the school district, addressed the needs of the *consumer*, our second component of the food chain. Alden enlightened us about the issues and opportunities around creating nutritious meals for \$1.80 per lunch! His

efforts focus on sustainable practices, such as sourcing produce and protein locally and regionally, and working with staff to create new recipes for which federally-subsidized foods can be obtained in their elemental states and not already processed into less nutritious offerings. And, his efforts and those of his staff are paying off. Students are demonstrating with their forks and spoons that they like the changes!



Launa Zimmaro, local Leaguer, member of the LWVMA Program and Action Committee where she focuses on LWVMA environmental legislative priorities, and member of the Carlisle Household Recycling Committee has a saying, “waste isn’t waste until it’s wasted.” *Waste management* was the third aspect of the food chain offered during the panel discussion. Launa recapped her experience in spearheading the composting project at the Carlisle Elementary and Middle School, how the participation by students has grown, and that this project is becoming a self-

sustaining activity. From Launa’s perspective, she is witnessing that students not only enjoy the experience of working in the garden but also are demonstrating leadership in making change happen, especially in reducing the amount of waste being generated.



This glimpse of our speakers’ talks was followed by a question and answer session facilitated by Debbie Barr and brief remarks by Brooke Redmond (photo above) on the Community Food Assessment project currently being undertaken in Concord. Please check the insert page for information on other activities and ways to become more involved.

*Dee Ortner, LWVCC Membership Chair*

*Editor’s note: Thank you to Kathleen Elcox for taking photos at the program. The ones shown here plus additional photos can be seen on our website – [www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org).*

# ADVANCING LWVCC ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Launa Zimmaro, LWVCC Environmental Affairs Specialist

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## **The Updated Bottle Bill (UBB): *HB 890; SB1650***

After failure to move the bill out of Committee<sup>1</sup> before the Legislative winter recess, coalition advocates are gearing up for a major effort leading up to March 21<sup>st</sup>—Joint Rule 10 Day—the last day of this legislative session for action on pending bills<sup>2</sup>. There are three options for bills. They may receive:

1. a favorable report which allows them to move to the floor for a vote
2. an adverse report and die in committee
3. a study order, a designation equated with quietly killing a bill

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy

<sup>2</sup> *Limit of Time allowed for Reports of Committees.*

**10.** All joint committees and the committees on Rules of the two branches, acting concurrently, shall make final report not later than the third Wednesday of March of the second annual session of the General Court on all matters referred to them before the third Wednesday in February of the second annual session and within 30 days on all matters referred to them on and after the third Wednesday in February of the second annual session of the General Court except that the committee on Health Care Financing shall make final report not later than the last Wednesday of April of the second annual session on all matters referred to them on or before the fourth Wednesday of March and within 30 days on all matters referred to it after the fourth Wednesday in March of the second annual session of the General Court.:

<http://www.malegislature.gov/legislation/joinrules>

In addition to planning an event in February (possibly tied to Valentine's Day, e.g., We Love UBB), energy will be focused on building small business support for the bill. Coalition members are working on this and will be asking their membership/group networks to help identify and approach local businesses as part of this effort.

Opponents argue that curbside programs are a better fix for container litter than an expanded redemption system. Aside from the fact that not all communities have curbside programs, residential curbside collection does not deal with the issue of 'on the go' litter when we're away from home. Additionally, numerous studies show that redemption systems bring in significantly more discarded containers than curbside collection programs in terms of material collected—a prime objective—and that redemption and curbside systems can be complimentary<sup>3</sup>. Go to <http://www.sierraclubmass.org/ubb/index.html> to compare industry claims to redemption system facts.

A recent study by the Container Recycling Institute (CRI)<sup>4</sup> documents that the benefits of strong redemption and recycling programs include job creation, a major benefit at any time, but particularly within the context of the current unemployment numbers.

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<sup>3</sup>

<http://www.bottlebill.org/about/benefits/curbside.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.container-recycling.org/issues/jobs.htm>

## **E-Waste Bill: S.2078**

We had the good news in November that an E-Waste Bill was slated to move out of Committee and into the next phase of Legislative consideration. The bill is now in The Senate Ways and Means Committee, the final round before going to the floor for a vote.

While there are several provisions of the bill that are consistent with strong E-Waste legislation, plans to push the bill to the floor for a vote are on hold as advocates study the bill closely to understand the implications and possible outcomes of the bill as a whole.

E-Waste bills based on Extended Producer Responsibility principles provide financial benefits to municipalities by shifting the cost of collection, transportation and processing of discarded electronics from taxpayers to producers. But it's important to keep in mind that a primary goal of an E-Waste bill is increased collection and recycling of electronic discards and responsible handling and disposal of what can't be reused or recycled.

Based on the experience of states that have enacted E-Waste legislation, there is good understanding of what works and what doesn't in terms of achieving financial relief and increased collection of material:

- The cost for collection, transportation and processing of material is paid by industry and Collectors (including municipalities) are fairly compensated;
- Per capita collection targets are established based on existing data that raise the collection bar to a higher level;
- Convenience standards are based on population with an eye on access and include—at a minimum—free, ongoing, drop-off programs at all existing sites, evenly distribution throughout the state.

E-Waste advocacy groups have been meeting with members of The Senate Ways and Means staff to discuss the bill in detail and offer recommend changes. It's worth the wait to do all that can be done to influence the final language of this bill to ensure it delivers what effective E-Waste bills are designed to do.

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE: FOLLOW THE MONEY

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The issue of money in politics is permeating airwaves now that campaign season is in full swing. Interest in this issue is particularly high in light of the January 2010 Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC* asserting free speech rights of corporations, aka 'corporate personhood.'

The LWV of Concord-Carlisle MA (LWVCC) has been working on this topic for over a year. This past summer, LWVCC established a planning committee including members of other local Leagues in MA to develop a multi-level campaign involving local, state and national action in response to the level of interest of local Leagues across the state.

*If you'd like to learn more about the **Follow the \$(Money)** project or if you'd like to become more involved, contact us directly by sending an email to: [ftm@lwvcc.org](mailto:ftm@lwvcc.org).*

While still a work in progress, some materials are currently available for reference and use by other Leagues. Materials developed to date can be found under the 4<sup>th</sup> heading (Follow the Money LWVCC) at:

<https://sites.google.com/site/presidentslwvma/file-cabinet>. Materials include:

- Letter to the Editor (time sensitive material)
- Books and online resources related to campaign finance reform

- Questions for Candidate Forums
- FT\$ Focus Group Overview

Other material is under development and soon all materials will be available on a separate 'page' of our website, [www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org). In the meantime, here are some steps each of us can take to be informed and to keep campaign finance reform a priority in this election season.

- Use the Questions for Candidates guide when meeting with candidates at all levels.
- Talk to your friends and family about the need for campaign finance reform.
- Question every political advertisement you see or hear. Does the ad state clearly who paid for it? If the sponsor is a group or organization, can you go to its website and see who is a member and who contributes? If not, ask yourself why not?
- Visit <http://www.opensecrets.org> for reliable information for following the money in races in your district and around the country.
- Visit <http://www.followthemoney.org> for reliable information on money in state-level politics.

*Launa Zimmaro  
FT\$ Communications*

# PRIVATIZATION: THE PUBLIC POLICY DEBATE

(Excerpts from LWVUS Article by Nora Leech)

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## Claims and Concerns

Those promoting privatization claim that:

- The private sector can provide increased efficiency, better quality and more innovation in services than the government;
- A smaller government will reduce costs to the taxpayer; and
- Less regulation will provide a better environment for business, thus creating more jobs.

Those concerned about privatization suggest the following.

- Profits: The mandate to make a profit will endanger public safety and reduce services available to the general public.
- Costs: There will be increased costs to consumers.
- Transparency and Accountability: Private companies will lack transparency, adequate oversight and accountability.
- Corruption: There will be increased corruption between government and for-profit, private companies.
- National Defense: Privatizing sectors such as ports, utilities and defense can result in foreign control and will put the country at risk in the event of war.
- Inequality: The scale of privatized programs will result in chronic high unemployment, low wages and abusive labor practices, leading to growing inequality between the wealthy and poor.

## History

In the 1970s, disillusioned with the Progressive Era vision, leadership in the increasingly global private sector became more active, asserting that burgeoning tax rates and government regulations of industry were inhibiting free trade. Efforts were launched to dismantle many Progressive programs such as restrictions on financial lending, elimination of worker's compensation, elimination of control over food and environmental

safety, and a revamping of the tax system by eliminating progressive taxes and replacing it with a flat tax.

## Privatization in Practice

The key strategies as to how to downsize government and transfer programs to the private sector are described as:

- Privatization by attrition Cessation of public programs and disengagement of government from specific kinds of responsibilities. Example might be the U.S. postal system.
- Transfer of assets direct sale or lease of public land, infrastructure, and enterprises. Examples might be federal and state parks, state-owned liquor stores and the proposed privatization of public libraries.
- Contracting out (public/private partnerships) or vouchers Instead of directly producing some service, the government may finance private services, for example through contracting out or vouchers. Examples might be charter schools, prisons.
- Deregulation of entry into activities previously treated as public monopolies. Examples might be utilities, water, waste management, air traffic control and ports.

## Role of Government

The public agenda of privatization requires a close examination of the proper relationship between government, business and civil society. What should the role of government be in protecting the environment, helping the poor, defending the nation, providing justice, ensuring democracy, protecting public health, ensuring public safety, providing education, promoting a thriving economy, and ensuring safe work environments and a living wage? Our country must seek a pragmatic balance between social and economic returns.

*Paula Vandever, LWVCC Co-President*

## LWVCC SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

Deb Barr, Cindy Nock and Dan Proctor are working on a definition of Sustainability for the LWVCC to adopt at our next Annual Meeting. Discussion has varied from how simple or how broad the definition should be to what are indicators of sustainability in our communities. How do we measure or assess sustainability? Currently a list of readings and resources on Sustainability is being compiled. To stimulate interest and thought on this topic here are some of the definitions being considered:

- **Sustainability** is the capacity to endure. – wiki
- “...**sustainable development** is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” – UN Brundtland Commission March 20, 1987
- The “**three pillars of sustainability**” are the reconciliation of environmental, social and economic demands. – 2005 World Summit
- The **sustainability goal** is to live without increasing the use of resources beyond globally sustainable levels; that is, to not exceed “one planet” consumption.

What do we mean when we refer to sustainability? If you would like to join the Sustainability Group please contact Deb Barr, Cindy Nock or Dan Proctor.  
*Cindy Nock, LWVCC Co-President*

## UP AND DOWN THE HILL

The US congress may be slow to act but to its credit the Massachusetts Legislature is at work and there are many legislative issues which the LWVMA is following. While much of our immediate attention has been focused on our environmental legislation, health care and disclosure, there is a great deal more happening on Beacon Hill in which we should be interested and on which the LWVMA is working on.

Voter registration and Voter Rights are issues which are likely to become more in the news as we move into the election year. There is a push nationally to adopt more stringent Voter ID laws and some versions of such laws will almost certainly make it very difficult for people who are older or poor to vote. There are many rumors about voter fraud but there are virtually no documented cases of such. On the other hand the possibility that electronic voting machines could be tampered with is very real. There is bound to be more about this as the election season progresses.

The casino legislation has passed but the subject is far from closed.

The LWVMA will also be following legislation concerned with helping to prevent school drop outs, bringing more civic instruction into the schools, etc. The LWVMA website carries much information as to the bills we are following.

The LWVMA will again hold its Day on the Hill in April (date TBA) at which time we will have a chance to hear about upcoming legislation and speak with our legislators.

*Louise Haldeman, LWVMA Specialist*

## **January 2012    Domestic Violence Prevention activities**

*Introduction: national and state **League of Women Voters** chapters have made a significant commitment to domestic violence prevention with reports in every **Concord-Carlisle League** newsletter. Included:*

- **Rachel's' Box Project**
- **Domestic Violence Services Network [DVSN]**  
(including **DVVAP** & **Network for Women's Lives [NWL]**)

*Following are excerpts from detailed information on the Domestic Violence Services Network web site. [dvvap@concordma.gov](mailto:dvvap@concordma.gov) or call 978-318-3421.*

### **Be a DVVAP Volunteer Advocate**

**DVVAP serves victims of domestic violence in a way that respects victim's dignity and choices while promoting safety.** DVVAP offers unconditional support and caring to families living with domestic violence. We **listen** to callers' stories in a safe and secure environment; **assess** the level of risk of things such as escalating violence or control; **identify** options for action: develop safety planning tools with callers; and **refer** callers to the wide array of other confidential sources of support in our community.

**DVVAP trains community volunteers to become advocates who offer empowering knowledge and gentle compassion.**

DVVAP's services are provided by staff and highly-trained volunteer advocates. **To be a DVVAP volunteer advocate, you must:**

- complete an application
- participate in a personal interview
- submit names and contact information for three references
- consent to a criminal background check
- undergo 30 hours of classroom training
- participate in 13-16 hours of supervised shift work; and attend two in-services for every six months of participation as an advocate

All volunteers are asked to make a minimum service commitment of two shifts per month for one year. In becoming a DVVAP advocate, you become an integral and vital cornerstone in the success of DVVAP and its ability to provide quality, caring services in central Middlesex.

### **DVVAP participates in community initiatives that address domestic violence.**

DVVAP staff and volunteers are actively involved in initiatives such as: **community roundtables**, comprised of people from the business community, social service, mental health, and medical providers, clergy, police, probation, attorneys, schools, advocates, legislators, philanthropists, and concerned citizens who offer educational programming and develop out-reach projects to address domestic violence; **specialized police department units** and personnel devoted to eradicating domestic violence; **outreach and education programs** in the schools, faith and medical communities.