

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONCORD-CARLISLE

BULLETIN

March 2010 LWVCC Website: www.lwvcc.com P.O. Box 34 Concord, Massachusetts 01742-0034 Volume 14 09-10 #4

CALENDAR

MARCH

17	Wed	LWVCC Local Program Planning (Erin Pastuszenski)	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
19	Fri	LWVCC Program Democracy in the Balance: Corporate Power in Politics Trinitarian-Congregational Church, 54 Walden St.	7-9 PM
23	Tues	Concord Town Elections	polls open 7 AM-8 PM
24	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting	8-9 AM
24	Wed	LWVCC Warrant review for members (N. Beeuwkes)	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
29	Mon	CCHS Master Plan Report & Recommendations, CCHS library	7-8:30 PM
31	Wed	LWVCC Book Group, Trustees Room, Concord Library, Concord Center	10-11:30 AM

APRIL

5	Mon	Carlisle Special Town Meeting	
7	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting (Nancy Beeuwkes)	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
13	Tues	Carlisle Special Town Election	polls open 7 AM-8 PM
14	Wed	LWVCC Board meeting, warrant article decisions (Haldeman)	9:30-12 noon
14	Wed	LWVCC Environmental Movie Night (Nancy Beeuwkes)	7:30 PM
21	Wed	LWVCC ESC (Becky Shannon)	8-9 AM
26-29		Concord Town Meeting, CCHS Auditorium, (continuing May 3-4 if needed)	7:00 PM
28	Wed	LWVMA Day on the Hill, State House, Boston	9:30-12 noon

MAY

5	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting (Susan Sekuler)	9:00 coffee, 9:30 mtg
10	Mon	Carlisle Annual Town Meeting	7 PM
18	Tues	Carlisle Town Election	polls open 7 AM-8 PM
19	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting (Barbara Lewis)	8-9 AM
22	Sat	LWVMA Council and Birthday Party, Lasell College, Newton	11 AM-7 PM
26	Wed	LWVCC Annual Meeting, 100 Keyes Rd. Concord Center	7:00 PM

JUNE

2	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting (Erin Pastuszenski)	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
11-15		LWVUS National Convention, Atlanta	
12-13		RiverFest	
23	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting (Ardis Bordman)	8-9 AM

*Members are invited to attend monthly Board meetings.
Please contact Becky or Paula if you would like to attend any of them.*

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan grassroots 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

Becky Shannon and Paula Vandever, Co-Presidents

Dear League Friends,

It's local election time and both Carlisle and Concord are preparing for Town elections and Town Meetings. We hope you were able to attend LWVCC's Concord Candidates Forum held March 7th and/or LWVCC's Carlisle School Building Forum, March 11th. League members are currently studying the Town Meeting Warrant Articles. There will be an informal review of the warrant articles, March 24th, at the home of Nancy Beeuwkes. Concord Town Moderator Ned Perry, Selectwoman Virginia McIntyre and Concord resident Peggy Brace will present pertinent details and the ramifications of some of the articles. Ginny Lamere and Concord Carlisle School Committee Chair, Jan McGinn, will discuss articles of importance for both towns at our April 7th Board meeting. Then on April 14th there will be a special meeting at the home of Louise Haldeman to decide which Articles to support or oppose and whether to make comments at either TM. Contact one of us if you would like to attend one of these meetings.

As you know, this has been a very busy time for the LWVCC. Our local program, "Life in the Balance," (LITB) has been a great success. Since our last Bulletin, we have held "Life in the Balance: Powering the Future" with two well attended forums. We will discuss the possibility of continuing the LITB series or doing something completely new next year at the LWVCC's Local Program planning meeting, March 17th, at the home of Erin Pastuszenski. We will then vote on the local program recommendation at our Annual Meeting which will be held May 26th at 100 Keyes Road.

Regarding issues at the state level, League members continue to oppose casino gambling, to work for environmental regulation including the e-waste bill, for needed health care bills and more. April 28th is Day on the Hill where we will have the opportunity to hear from the LWVMA specialists who will speak about pending legislation in their areas of expertise, such as: Affordable Housing, Education, Equal Rights/Reproductive Rights and Environment. Following those presentations, LWVCC members and occasionally local students meet with our legislators State Senator Susan Fargo and State Representative Cory Atkins for a luncheon briefing. Contact one of us if you would like to attend.

February 14th was the LWVUS's 90th Anniversary and Senator Harry Reid read a proclamation on the floor of the U.S. Senate, naming February 14 as National League of Women Voters Day in honor of our 90th Anniversary. Now, as Louise Haldeman commented, if we could succeed in convincing the Senate to pass health care reform, campaign finance reform and many of the other issues that the League advocates, we'd really be celebrating. But, we will not give up the efforts.

We hope that you are calling, writing, e-mailing, and speaking in person if possible, to your members of Congress and State Legislators when you receive Action Alerts from the League. Let your voices be heard time and time again!

Sincerely,

Becky Shannon and Paula Vandever, Co-Presidents

LWVCC MEMBER NEWS

The 2010 LWVCC Membership Directory is being put together by Susan Livingston and should arrive in the mail at the end of the month. A number of new members have joined recently, several as a result of attending one of the Life in the Balance programs – an added benefit of all of the effort that went into organizing this series!

If you have any questions regarding membership, please contact me at 978-287-0049 or email at

Membership@lwvcc.com.

Barbara Lewis, Membership Chair

LWVCC LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING MARCH 17

- Have you enjoyed the “Life in The Balance” series? That program resulted from ideas presented at our Local Program Planning meeting last year.
- Do you have any ideas for what you would like to see our League address next year?
- Are there critical issues needing our attention?
- Would you like to see a new study, a change in our Local Positions, or specific recommended initiatives?

Come to the **Local Program Planning meeting on March 17th**, 9:00 am coffee and conversation, 9:30 am the meeting begins, at the home of Erin Pastuszewski. The final suggestions will be recommended to the attendees of Annual Meeting who, on May 26th, will vote to decide what will occur at the local level next year. Bring your ideas to the meeting on March 17th.

Paula Vandever, Co-President

LWVCC BOOK GROUP

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 31, 2010 in the Trustees Room in the Concord Public Library from 10:00-11:30 AM. We will discuss Greg Mortenson’s books: *Three Cups of Tea* and *Stones into Schools*. The two books tell the story of how Mortenson’s efforts began in Pakistan with one school and successfully grew to include the establishment of a large number of schools in the mountainous regions of both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The League’s book group meets four times a year to discuss nonfiction books on a variety of pertinent and thought-provoking topics. If you would like more information please call or email Anne Hayden at (978) 369-8526 or

Book_Group@lwvcc.com.

Anne Hayden, Book Group Chair

****Save this date****

LWVCC 2010 ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 26th 7 p.m.

“A Civic Engagement –

Town Meeting in Concord”

Speaker: Ned Perry

Concord Town Moderator 2000-2010

Ned Perry will give us a few glimpses behind some of the difficult moments and memorable accomplishments of Town Meeting in Concord over the last ten years. He will comment on the League's activities in Concord and some additional roles he believes the League could undertake in our Town. Ned will conclude with a few comments on what he enjoyed about moderating this purest form of democracy and what he found to be the most challenging parts of the engagement.

LIFE IN THE BALANCE

DEMOCRACY IN THE BALANCE: CORPORATE POWER IN POLITICS

Just weeks ago, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, abruptly changed the rules for corporate and union spending on political campaigns. What led up to the decision, how will it affect elections and our democracy, and what actions can individuals take in response? To answer some of these questions, four local community groups have organized **Democracy in the Balance: Corporate Power in Politics**, a free public forum on Friday, March 19, 2010, from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Trinitarian-Congregational Church, 54 Walden St, Concord, MA.

The forum will feature three experts: Mary Zepernick, a researcher for the Program on Corporations, Law & Democracy and a board member of the Women's International League of Peace & Freedom, both of which filed an *amicus curiae* (i.e., friend of the Court) brief in *Citizens United*; Jeffery Clements, the Concord lawyer who was counsel of record for that *amicus* brief; and John Bonifaz, constitutional lawyer, founder of the National Voting Rights Institute and legal director of Voter Action in Western Massachusetts.

After the presentations, there will be an opportunity for discussion. This free forum is open to all, and refreshments will be served.

Democracy in the Balance is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Concord Carlisle; the Alliance for Democracy, North Bridge chapter;

Carlisle Climate Action; and ConcordCAN (Concord Climate Action Network). For more information call (978) 369-3842 or visit www.lwvcc.com.

Erin Pastuszewski
Communications Director

FOOD FOR THOUGHT NING NETWORK AND GOOGLE GROUP

The Food for Thought Ning Network (<http://concordfood.ning.com>) is a new online community for people who care about good food in Concord and Carlisle. After the November 20 Food for Thought forum, the resulting action groups sought ways to share information with each other and with the larger community. The Ning Network is an online site that includes a calendar, relevant articles, video clips, photos, and social networking features. Anyone can view the site. Anyone who wishes to add content to or receive updates from the site can sign up as a member. (Just click on "Join the Network" or "Sign Up.") If you have any questions, please contact Erin Pastuszewski at Communications@lwvcc.com or 978-369-3842.

A Google Group also was established for Food for Thought information-sharing, and it is now used primarily for occasional announcements. If you wish to receive the Concord/Carlisle Food for Thought Google Group emails, please email ccfoodforthought+subscribe@googlegroups.com.

Erin Pastuszewski
Communications Director

**LWVUS HEALTH CARE
RESOLUTION**

At the March meeting of the LWVCC Board it was decided to send the following Resolution to the LWVUS for a vote at the June 2010 LWVUS National Convention.

Whereas the League of Women Voters of the United States believes quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents; and

Whereas the current and proposed systems benefit the health insurance industry and do not achieve the League goals of affordability and access to everyone; and

Whereas an improved Medicare for All, or publicly funded and privately delivered national health care plan, is consistent with this goal;

Therefore, be it resolved we, the representatives of local and state Leagues assembled at the 2010 LWVUS Convention, call upon the LWVUS Board to advocate strongly for bills that legislate for improved Medicare for All.

Background: For five years League members from across the country have met via conference calls around the issue of health care reform. The group is called HCR4US - "health care reform for the U.S."

The group actively worked before and during the last two LWVUS National Conventions resulting in health care reform becoming an Advocacy Priority

and the establishment of an LWVUS task force to help local and state Leagues with Health care reform education and lobbying.

However, given the belief that the current health care reform in Congress does not adequately reflect the League's Position, this Resolution will be submitted to the LWVUS to move the direction of the national League's lobbying efforts toward "Improved Medicare for All" legislation.

So far, in the last month since the Resolution was written, the following Leagues across the country have signed it: Amherst, MA; Sudbury, MA; Concord-Carlisle, MA; Tallahassee, FL; Bloomington, IN; Tompkins County, NY; San Diego, CA; and Capistrano Bay, CA. Many local and state Leagues across the country will sign this Resolution when it is sent, the second half of March, to the 400 Leagues with expressed interest and then to all 836 League presidents. While delegates at June's LWVUS National Convention will decide whether or not to pass the Resolution, the LWVUS Board will ultimately decide how to lobby for health care reform. Health care reform will continue to be refined for years to come even if we see a bill from Congress soon.

Paula Vandever, Co-President

**DAY ON THE HILL
TRANSPORTATION: GETTING
AROUND IN MASSACHUSETTS
Wednesday April 28, 2010
9:00-12:00 noon
State House, Boston
\$10.00 registration fee**

BACK IN THE GAME:

CASINO GAMBLING REVISITED

New legislation is being proposed by House Speaker DeLeo which calls for 2 resort casinos and slot machines at race tracks. The Speaker's desire and hope is that by doing so, enough jobs will be created to alleviate the high unemployment among blue collar workers and to bring some much needed revenue into the state. No one can fault the Speaker's good intention but a look at the economic facts and the many ramifications of such an action clearly shows that very few of his hopes would be accomplished.

In the first place, casinos are not recession proof. Most of the famed Atlantic City casinos are in bankruptcy, Foxwoods and the Mohegan Sun have laid off many workers, and the list goes on even to Las Vegas.

Secondly while there would be some jobs, the estimate of the number of permanent jobs other than in construction, appears to be overly optimistic. "Destination Casinos" would employ more people than would slot parlors at race tracks but many of these workers would come from the laid off workers at other casinos. If the jobs are not mostly from the existing community, this raises the issue of increased demand on the general infrastructure of the surrounding towns.

Thirdly casinos may already be over built. While the owners of casinos assume that there are still more customers out there and they may be right, are there enough to keep them all running? When Foxwoods stood alone it had the customer base to itself. When the Mohegan Sun went into operation, that

cut into their take and that was before the recession. Furthermore, if this legislation or some form of it passes, it will mean that Massachusetts has legalized Class 3 Gambling which will in turn open the doors to the Native American Tribes which as sovereign nations, may do on their land anything which is legal in the state. This is a complicated issue but it could lead to even more gambling facilities which would surely not be economically viable in the long run.

Even if we could be sure of the money to be made, there are of course many other problems. The casinos make their money, not from the responsible holiday makers, certainly the majority of the customers, who go to enjoy the fun but know when to stop. The profits come from the people who bet to excess and lose great sums of money. The attendant problems of financial ruin, domestic violence, and even ventures into crime are well documented.

It may be that if the promised revenue and jobs were to be fulfilled we could deal with the damage to a small but significant number of people but we need to know much more before we can in any conscience make that decision.

As this issue has dragged on, opponents and some proponents have called for an independent cost/benefit analysis to be done. As citizens we should insist that such an analysis be done before the Legislature takes any action.

Louise Haldeman

LWVMA Casino Gambling Specialist

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]**)
- other timely area projects

Rachel's Box Project serves victims of domestic violence, as well as child and elder abuse, in **50 locations around the western suburbs**. Please notify Nancy James 978-369-2771 if you notice boxes in disarray or needing materials. *The Network for Women's Lives* Rachel's Box Committee tends the boxes and provides updated materials and *Network* newsletters.

Network for Women's Lives now a part of the **Domestic Violence Services Network**, continues its primary mission to provide education and outreach. For more information on programs and services, please visit www.networkforwomenslives.org.

Watch the web site for the **Interfaith Clergy Symposium** Wednesday, May 5, 8:30 am–12:30 pm

Domestic Violence Services Network through **DVVAP** trains community volunteers to become advocates who "offer empowering knowledge and gentle compassion. **DVSN** defines domestic violence on their web site www.dvvap.org as follows:

Many people think that domestic violence is when a husband hits his wife. While this is often true, domestic violence means much more than physical harm.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the law states that domestic violence occurs if any:

- household member
- dating partner
- married or formerly married partner
- parent of a child in common, or
- relative by blood or marriage:
 - * attempts to cause physical harm
 - * causes physical harm
 - * places another in fear of physical harm, or
 - * causes another to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threat, or duress

DVSN's Definition

DVSN's definition of domestic violence includes the legal definition stated above and also includes other forms of abuse. At DVSN,

- * **domestic violence is defined as a pattern of coercive control that one individual intermittently exerts over another by means of spiritual, emotional, sexual, physical, or economic abuse.**

By: Nancy P. James
3/9/2010
978-369-2771

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONCORD CARLISLE

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

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Senator Scott Brown
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Governor Patrick)

Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray
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DEMOCRACY IN THE BALANCE

CORPORATE
POWER
IN POLITICS

A FORUM

on the recent Supreme Court Decision in the
Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission

Friday, March 19, 7 to 9 pm
Trinitarian-Congregational Church Hall
54 Walden St, Concord, MA

A PUBLIC FORUM TO:

- Look at the historical highlights of government restrictions upon or expansion of corporate power since the founding of our nation.
- Explain the recent Supreme Court case and its likely impact on our democracy.
- Learn about and discuss options for addressing the now unfettered corporate influence on elections.

FORUM SPEAKERS:

MARY ZEPERNICK: Researcher for the Program on Corporations, Law & Democracy and board member of the Women's International League for Peace & Freedom – two groups presenting an amicus curiae brief to the Court in this case.

JEFFREY CLEMENTS: Concord lawyer and *Counsel of Record* for the above mentioned amicus curiae brief.

JOHN BONIFAZ: Constitutional lawyer, founder of the National Voting Rights Institute and currently legal director of Voter Action in Western Massachusetts.

CO-SPONSORED BY:

Alliance for Democracy, North Bridge chapter * Carlisle Climate Action
ConcordCAN * League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle

