

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONCORD-CARLISLE

BULLETIN

LWVCC Website: www.lwvcc.org

November 2012

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

Volume 17 2012-13 #2

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

15	Thurs	LWVMA Moderator Training Session, Harvey Wheeler Community Center	7-9:30 pm
21	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting, 100 Newbury Ct., #208	8:30-9:30 am
27	Tues	Carlisle Town Election, Carlisle Town Hall	7:00 am-8:00 pm
27	Tues	LWVCC Town Government Initiative Comm mtg: Concord 2014 Budget Review	1:30 pm
28	Wed	LWVCC Book Group, Concord Library Fowler Branch, 1322 Main St.	10:00-11:30 am
29	Thurs	LWVCC Running for Office in Concord Workshop, Concord Town House	7:30-9:30 pm

DECEMBER

1	Sat	Concord Town Meeting Coordination Meeting, Town House	9:00 am
3	Mon	Concord Town Warrant opens at Selectmen's Meeting	7:00 pm
5	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting & Holiday Pot Luck Lunch 1360 Monument St.	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg 12:00-1:30 pm lunch

JANUARY

2	Wed	Concord Town Warrant closes	4:00 pm
9	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 63 Coppermine Rd.	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
19	Sat	LWVCC Membership Get together, topic TBA	
TBA		LWVCC Getting Involved in Town Government in Carlisle	
28	Mon	Concord Town Caucus, Town House	7:30 pm

FEBRUARY

6	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 41 Canterbury Ct.	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
6	Wed	LWVCC: Our Town, Our Schools, Our Money Forum, place TBA	
20	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting, 100 Newbury Ct., #208	8:30-9:30 am

MARCH

6	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 398 Lowell Rd., Carlisle	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
19	Tues	Concord Town Election	7:00 am-8:00 pm
20	Wed	LWVCC ESC meeting, 100 Newbury Ct., #208	8:30-9:30 am

APRIL

3	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 64 Strawberry Hill Rd.	9 coffee, 9:30 mtg
6	Sat	LWVCC House Tour: "New Homes, New Technologies"	

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.

Co-Presidents	Cindy Nock	(978) 254-1598	Co-Presidents@lwvcc.org
	Paula Vandever	(978) 254-1598	Co-Presidents@lwvcc.org
Membership	Dee Ortner	(978) 254-1598	Membership@lwvcc.org
Bulletin Editor	Anne Hayden	(978) 254-1598	BULLETIN@lwvcc.org
Webmaster	Julie Rohwein	(978) 254-1598	wm@lwvcc.org

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

Cindy Nock and Paula Vandever, Co-Presidents

November 2012

Dear League Members,

And ...breathe out! Now that the big election season is over we can relax and move on to activities other than candidates forums. Ok breathe in ... now we move into local election season and our snap voter service team of Erin Pastuszewski and Barbara Lewis are gearing up for workshops in "Moderator Training" on November 15, "Running for Office in Concord" on November 29 and "Getting involved in Town Government in Carlisle" in January. It is amazing what our Voter Service crew of dedicated people were able to accomplish! A special thanks for all their work to inform voters. The LWVUS was active during the election season fighting voter suppression efforts in many states, including Florida, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Texas and Minnesota. They have done an amazing job with many successes and are still watching vigilantly as other states consider implementing voter ID and other oppressive voter laws.

We are looking forward to our annual Holiday Potluck party on December 5 at the home of Nancy Beeuwkes at October Farm. Our speakers will be Chris Whelan, Town Manager of Concord and Tim Goddard, Town Administrator of Carlisle. All members are invited to attend the potluck at noon after the LWVCC Board meeting. Please contact us if you'd like to attend the Board meeting or the potluck or both.

State and Local Program planning meetings will occur in January. This is the time to consider what issues members wish to study in order to add to our current Positions and what issues, based on current Positions, we wish to advocate for or against. Visit our website to review our state and local Positions: www.lwvcc.org. The LWVCC creates Program each year while the state League creates Program for a two-year period. At the state level, suggestions are due February 1, 2013 in anticipation of State Convention on May 17 and 18 when we vote to accept the proposed Program. The LWVCC votes on Program at our Annual Meeting each year. This year our speaker at the LWVCC Annual Meeting will be Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood which will be held May 15 at the Concord Art Association. Save that date.

As we think about what the League offers at each level, we have the opportunity to share our enthusiasm by participating in the State phonathon to raise money for the LWVMA. Our local League receives a share of every donation we obtain for the LWVMA. We plan to hold a phonathonapalooza evening of phone calling at the home of Nancy Beeuwkes.

Our Membership Committee is currently planning our January Membership Get Together which will be held at the Colonial Inn this year on Saturday January 19, a new change in the day of the meeting to allow more working members to attend. A speaker is still being sought.

Concord's "Our Towns, Our Schools, Our Money Forum" is planned for early February and the season for hearings, caucuses, local candidate forums and elections will be upon us with Town Meeting following close after. Contact us if you are interested in helping with the forum.

We thank all of you LWVCC members for the dedication and support you provide and we look forward to interacting with you at all of these upcoming League events!

Please enjoy this Bulletin, mark your calendars with all the League has to offer and find a friend to join the League!

Sincerely,
Cindy Nock and Paula Vandever

LWVCC MEMBER NEWS

Membership Renewal

The July 2012 through June 2013 member renewal drive is nearing completion. We've had about 70 single and 25 household renewals come in, yet still have about 40 to go. Thank you to those who have responded. We're hoping to close our drive by the end of the calendar year so, if you haven't responded as yet, please send in your checks or update your membership through PayPal on our league website.

This year we had such an astounding response to member donations (additional amount above membership dues) that we are now in the black! That means we have sufficient money to cover our per member payment (PMP) for national and state obligations for the fiscal year plus some left over that can be used towards programs and operating expenses. Thank you – thank you!

If you have any questions regarding your status, please send a message to membership@lwvcc.org or call 978-254-1598.

January Get-together

Now that we are in post-election mode, our focus has shifted to new beginnings and we're trying to corral as many of our legislators - state and national level - as possible for our January gathering. We look forward to hearing their ideas and concerns on the direction that our nation and state are headed. This gathering will combine both informal chatter and some formal words from our elected officials as well as time to meet and greet your fellow members and guests (please bring a neighbor or friend).

This will be a *Saturday* event so that more of you, our members, can attend. At this writing we're still finalizing details and will be sending out postcards and announcing more info in our Monday Member News as the day of the event nears. Thanks for your patience and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year!

*Dee Ortner, Membership Chair
Committee: Nancy Beeuwkes, Mary Chapman,
Irmie Doane & Barbara Lewis*

LWVCC ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK LUNCHEON

**Wed. December 5
12 noon to 1:30 pm
1360 Monument St.**

**Speakers: Chris Whelan, Concord Town Mgr
Tim Goddard, Carlisle Town Administrator**

All League members are invited to attend the potluck at noon after the LWVCC Board meeting. Please contact Paula Vandever or Cindy Nock if you'd like to attend the Board meeting.

Dee Ortner, LWVCC Membership Chair

STATE LEAGUE SEEKS VOLUNTEER “ANGELS”

Are you willing to help out occasionally with one-time tasks at the state level of the League? The Massachusetts League needs extra hands at times to do things like stuffing envelopes, answering the phones at the state office when office manager Natalie Kassabian is out, data entry, arranging refreshments for foreign visitors to the state office, helping with voter registration activities at festivals and events around the state, calling vendors for price quotes on needed purchases, and similar specific one-time jobs.

If you would like to add your name to the state League Angels list, send an email to Natalie (nkassabian@lwvma.org) or call her at 617-523-2999. When help is needed, she will send an email request to the Angels list and give you the opportunity to pitch in if it's convenient. The LWVMA Board will be very grateful for your help.

VOTER SERVICE

Erin Pastuszenski (Concord) and Barbara Lewis (Carlisle)

During the fall 2012 election season, the Concord-Carlisle League was visible, relevant and effective in engaging and informing voters. Great work, everyone! Next stop: The local elections and town meetings next spring. Contact Erin or Barbara anytime, by phone or at VoterService@lhwcc.org, if you'd like to get involved.

Upcoming Events and Activities

Running for Office Workshops – To encourage residents to run for office and inform them about the process, LWVCC is holding two workshops this year. The first program, Running for Office in Concord, is set for Thursday, November 29, 7:30-9:30 p.m., in the Town House Hearing Room, 22 Monument Square, Concord. Panelists include Town Clerk Anita Tekle, Town Moderator Eric Van Loon, Selectman Elise Woodward, School Committee member Phil Benincasa and Housing Authority Commissioner Linda Escobedo. The next local election in Concord will be on March 19, 2013, and the Town Caucus to nominate candidates is on January 28. The Running for Office workshop is free and open to the public. Contact Erin Pastuszenski at VoterService@lhwcc.org for more information.

For Carlisle, Barbara Lewis is organizing a Running for Office program to be held in January. Last year's caucus in Carlisle was held in late February, and the election was in early May. Watch LWVCC's Monday Member News for updates on the Carlisle workshop.

Voter Service Policies – Now that the busy fall election season is over, a Voter Service Policies working group has formed to review and update LWVCC's policies for candidate forums and other activities. If you would like to learn more about this project, please contact Erin Pastuszenski at VoterService@lhwcc.org.

2012 Fall Wrap-up

Voter Registration – LWVCC staffed voter registration and information tables at all 11 Back-to-School and Parents' Nights for the public schools in Carlisle and Concord this fall, collecting 47 completed registration forms. We also participated in National Voter Registration Day on September 25, greeting shoppers outside Crosby's Market in Concord, collecting 16 completed voter registration forms, and answering countless

questions about the election and absentee ballot applications. Adding up all of our 2012 voter registration drives (including at the CCHS Senior BBQ and the summer town celebrations), LWVCC received 128 completed registration forms and passed many more forms out for people to send in on their own.

We thank the many League members who helped register voters this fall, including Lauren Bakewell, Anita Barker, Nancy Beeuwkes, Janet Beyer, Anne Bidstrup, Sue Cannon, Mary Chapman, Di Clymer, Betsy Comstock, Nancy Cronin, Irmi Doane, Pamela Dritt, Susan Frey, Louise Haldeman, Judy Hill, Ginny Lamere, Barbara Lewis, Dee Ortner, Cath Parmelee, Erin Pastuszenski, Barbara Schnuer, Allison Selfridge, Joan Turner, Deena Whitfield and K.C. Winslow.

U.S. Congressional Candidates' Forum (MA 3rd District) – This fall, LWVCC sponsored a Sunday afternoon Congressional Candidates' Forum at the Concord-Carlisle High School Auditorium on September 30 with co-sponsors LWV-Acton Area and LWV of Westford. U.S. Representative Niki Tsongas (D-Lowell) and her Republican challenger, Jon Golnik of Carlisle, faced off before a crowd of around 180 supporters and voters from around Massachusetts' new 3rd congressional district.

The candidates responded to questions relating to economic development, the federal budget, foreign policy and campaigns and money, and addressed a series of audience questions on a range of other topics. We used a new format, with clusters of questions in each of several topic areas, and the candidates had a lively exchange. The forum was recorded for airing on local access cable TV, and it still may be available to view on demand at www.concordtv.org.

Our LWV moderator, Risa Nyman of the Brookline League, skillfully guided the candidates

and the audience during the forum. CCHS and CCTV staff provided support and advice. Seventeen members of the Acton Area, Andover/North Andover, Greater Haverhill, Harvard, Sudbury, Westford and Worcester Area Leagues joined 8 LWVCC volunteers at the High School to carry out a professional and fair forum for the voters. Thanks to all, especially our own Irmi Doane, Louise Haldeman, Cindy Nock, John Nock, Dee Ortner, Erin Pastuszenski, Julie Rohwein, Paula Vandever!

State Representative Candidates' Night (14th Middlesex District) – LWVCC invited the 3rd Middlesex District State Senate candidates, Michael Barrett and Sandi Martinez, and the 14th Middlesex District State Representative candidates, Representative Cory Atkins and Michael Benn, to address League and audience questions at a forum on October 17 at the Willard School. All candidates, except Ms. Martinez, accepted our invitation. We went forward with the state representative panel and, following rules against “empty chair” debates, cancelled plans for the senate panel. (LWV of Sudbury hosted a forum with the 3rd Middlesex senate candidates on October 15 and quickly made the video available on demand online, giving voters some opportunity to see the candidates together.)

Rep. Cory Atkins (D) and Michael Benn (R), both of Concord, spoke before an audience of 50 residents. They responded to questions from the League, from the public via email and from audience members, all asked by our LWV moderator, Nancy Carapezza of Wayland. Topics included jobs, taxation, regulations, campaign funding, bottle deposits, CCHS, ballot questions, health care and transportation. The program was recorded and may still be available on demand at www.concordtv.org.

Kudos to our volunteers for a well-run forum! Thank you, Anita Barker, Marge Daggett, Irmi Doane, Louise Haldeman, Anne Hayden, Barbara Lewis, Nancy Lippe, Cindy and John Nock, Dee Ortner, Erin Pastuszenski, Maura Perkins, Julie Rohwein and Paula Vandever.

Election Day (November 6) – LWVCC volunteers posted “VOTE Tuesday” signs before the election, and some of our members also participated in the nonpartisan poll-watching efforts of the Election

Protection Coalition (1-866-OURVOTE) of which LWVMA is a member.

Erin Pastuszenski & Barbara Lewis

LWV PROTECTED VOTER RIGHTS ACROSS THE U.S.

Did you know how central a role the League of Women Voters played in nationwide efforts to protect voters' rights during this election season? The following excerpt from a late October blog post by LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara on the Huffington Post website tells the story:

“During the past six weeks, I visited eight states and saw firsthand how Leagues are protecting voters' rights and educating voters. As attacks on voting rights proliferated, Leagues across the country have been working to prevent voter disenfranchisement and confusion. Together, with partner organizations, we've secured many victories for voting rights all across the country.

“Common sense recently triumphed in Ohio when the U.S. Supreme Court decided that the lower court's ruling on three days of early voting just before Election Day should stand. The Ohio League's coalition work was not in vain. Florida, too, was the scene of early voting challenges and voter roll purging efforts to which the League responded quickly. In Colorado, the League's concern was also voter roll purging. I met with the Secretary of State, who, unfortunately, did not help to mitigate our concerns despite an earlier report that he would not pursue this issue.

“A high point of my travels was meeting with elections officials, who are doing their utmost to ensure that elections are free, fair and accessible to every eligible voter and working side-by-side with our Leagues to accomplish this goal. In Missouri, Democratic and Republican election commissioners in Independence were truly concerned about the likely confusion over voter ID requirements and are training their workers to give voters correct information.

“In Florida, the League's voter registration efforts were put on hold for about a year, while the courts dealt with lawsuits. Ultimately, reason prevailed, but Leagues had to make up for lost time. They worked together with the Secretary of State,

despite earlier differences, in support of a common goal - to register as many voters as possible in the short time left. In fact, the Florida Leagues continued the push until the very last minute.

“Confusion over voter ID was a common theme along my trip. After winning their lawsuit, one way the Wisconsin League is combating confusion around the issue is by training observers to monitor the polls on Election Day. Its poll observer program opened doors to positive action from the state Government Accountability Board (GAB) in assisting elections officials to improve the process for election officials and voters. GAB, a nonpartisan board comprised of retired judges, is unique and refreshing in election administration and has worked with its constituencies to improve the state's process.

“In North Carolina another state where voter photo ID was defeated, it was a pleasure to personally thank Governor Beverly Perdue for supporting the League's efforts to protect the state's voters in this election. Her veto means North Carolinians will not have to produce restrictive, government- issued photo ID at the polls.

“In Michigan, also, thanks to the Governor's vetoes during the summer, the League was successful in helping to keep voters from having to produce unnecessary photo ID at the polls and re-affirm their citizenship on their ballots. Remaining doubts on the latter issue were resolved after my visit by a judge's order that the Michigan Secretary of State remove the question asking voters if they are U.S. citizens from ballot applications in the November election.

“In Minnesota, the League is still battling an amendment to their state constitution that would require photo voter ID. As in other states, the Minnesota League opposes this amendment because it is costly and complicated, and would create serious consequences, not to mention being unnecessary. While in Minnesota, I had several opportunities to get the word out on the League's mission to ensure free and fair elections for every eligible voter and on why the ballot amendment would be bad for Minnesota.”

We can report now that the League's hard work in Minnesota yielded a victory on November 6, when the voters defeated the proposed constitutional amendment.

In Massachusetts, the state League spoke out against local nonbinding ballot questions that urged legislators to pass laws requiring voters to show photo ID before voting. The League was also part of the nationwide Election Protection Coalition, along with groups like Common Cause and MassVOTE, and recruited members to work as poll watchers on Election Day.

Visit www.lwv.org to read more about the League's voter protection work across America. It's inspiring!

Erin Pastuszenski

I WAS AN ELECTION PROTECTION VOLUNTEER

When an email from the Massachusetts League was sent out with the following message... “Our partners in protecting voters' rights on Election Day, Common Cause, MassVote, the Massachusetts ACLU and the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, are recruiting volunteers to work as poll observers in precincts with a history of voter protection issues, and will be providing training. If you would like to volunteer or to know more, fill out the form at the Common Cause website,” Erin Pastuszenski and I signed up.

The training provided information on what it was that we were supposed to accomplish as volunteers, along with the rules governing what we could and could not do. The job of Election Protection Volunteers was to document conditions that were relevant to the ease with which voters were able to cast their ballots, and any activities that might be taking place that influence voters' decisions.

We could provide information to voters in line before they entered the polling station, and even ask as they left if they had encountered any difficulties. But we were not there to speak to any voters once they had entered the polling place or talk to poll workers. We were instructed to call the hotline, 866-OUR-VOTE, if we observed anything that was obstructing the integrity of the voting process, if anyone trying to cast a ballot was being denied, disruptions were occurring, or even if lines were excessive. Data bases and lawyers were on call to verify voters' registrations and proper precincts, and clarify the laws governing voters' rights.

I was assigned to a polling station in Lowell, at a senior center and was given the name of one other person assigned there, but got no reply from him about when he planned to be there, so had a feeling I might be on my own for the most part. Upon arriving shortly before the polls opened at 7 a.m. I introduced myself to the precinct warden and was offered a seat out of the way where I could observe the room, which accommodated three different precincts in the 7th ward.

I spent most of my time smiling encouragingly at voters and waving them past me to enter. Lowell poll workers were paid and worked the entire day, unlike the volunteers in Carlisle who worked in 3 and 4 hours shifts, and many of them slowly evolved from reserved suspicion about what my motives were, to curiosity, to warm appreciation, after realizing I was not there to be a thorn in their side. They began to come over to say hi and offer to bring me a coffee or water or donuts and I had several very nice conversations when they took a quick break. The election warden and I had a few short chats during lulls in the activity and I was able to ask some questions and offer a suggestion or two which she appreciated.

Voter volume was never a big problem during the morning hours that I was there. Many voters were first time or returned inactive or had recently moved, so needed extra help, which was energetically provided by poll workers, especially a tiny young woman full of helpful information and direction, rushing around serving as an interpreter to the large Cambodian population. I often saw voters arrive with a print out of instructions and information on polling location

that they had downloaded from the Secretary of State's office.

The only irregularity I observed was when four people arrived wearing Warren stickers, one with an Obama tee-shirt on. They were quickly asked to remove their stickers and I think the woman with the shirt left and may have returned wearing a jacket.

During the morning I walked around the building several times to see what was going on outside. Several voters standing in line glanced over at the title on my clipboard and nodded in appreciation or mouthed "Thank you." When I left shortly after 11:30 several poll workers came over to say good bye and thank you, and I got one big hug. I even received a nun's blessing after she had cast her ballot and was on her way out.

I filled out my report to mail in to Common Cause so that they could add to their data base on where problems occurred. It was a very enjoyable experience all in all, and I know the information I provided to the Coalition will be helpful in creating a profile of where problems may exist in the future.

Erin for her part served in Mattapan during the late afternoon and evening, and witnessed long lines with waits of over two hours. This also will become important information for future elections. I would be interested in the experiences of other observers and whether anyone had to take action or call for support if they saw any irregularities. For information about this work visit www.866ourvote.org.

Barbara Lewis

LWVMA Phonathon Fundraising Event

Thursday November 29 & Sunday December 2, 2012

This year we will be calling League members in Concord, Carlisle, and the Acton area. Our own League of Women Voters Concord-Carlisle will get 10% of the donations raised through our efforts.

Why give? This year especially, by registering over 1100 first-time voters in one day alone in Massachusetts, holding candidate forums across the state and providing oral and written testimony on legislative initiatives at the State House, the League has been vital to making our Democracy Work.

At the National level, the League has monitored, brought suit and testified in court on cases of unduly restrictive voter registration and ID laws in several states and successfully thwarted the suppression of voters.

Please give a donation in support of these efforts when we call and if you can join us in calling even better!

If you wish to make a donation but don't want to get a phone call, send an email to Co-Presidents@lwvcc.org with the amount of your pledged donation and the address where a pledge card may be sent. If you want to make a donation by credit card go to www.lwvma.org but send us an email so we get credit for the donation.

If you are interested in helping with the phonathon please contact Cindy Nock by emailing Co-Presidents@lwvcc.org or leave a phone message at 978-254-1598. Join us with your cell phone from 7-9 PM on the evenings of Nov 29 and Dec 2 at the home of Nancy Beeuwkes at October Farm or make calls from the comfort of your own home. We have all of the materials you need!



Suffragist Alice Paul on phone raising funds...it never ends!

**LEAGUE HOUSE TOUR THIS SPRING!
SATURDAY, APRIL 6**

It has been several years since our last House Tour which raised significant funding for all of our League activities. Once again this spring we will be offering this enjoyable and informative event to the Concord and Carlisle communities.

Each of our House Tours has a special theme. In 2004 it was “A Room of Her Own,” spaces women create that fit their needs and feed their souls. In 2006, “A Room of Our Own” showed how spaces can bring families together. In 2009, it was “Room for Us: Adapting Spaces to Your Needs.”

This year we are showcasing innovations in home building and design to incorporate new technologies and products. In addition, we will be holding the tour on a Saturday in the hopes of attracting a larger audience to the event.

Please put this date on your calendars now so you can plan your spring schedule around it! We encourage every member to contribute to this big effort in ways large or small. We need lots of volunteers to carry on the tradition of great success, both monetarily and image-wise, showing communities throughout the metro area that the League knows how to do things right. If you would like to join the planning team, email blglewis@comcast.net

**LWVCC BOOK GROUP
NEW DATE: Nov 28, 2012**

NEW LOCATION: CFPL Fowler Branch

The LWVCC Book Group has had to change both the date and location of its November meeting. The group will now meet on Wednesday, November 28, 2012 at the Fowler branch of the Concord Library, 1322 Main St. in West Concord Center.

However, the book will still be the same! We will be discussing *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* by Jean Baker. Back cover quote:

“They forever changed America: Lucy Stone, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frances Willard, Alice Paul. At their revolution’s start in the 1840s, a woman’s right to speak in public was questioned. By its conclusion in 1920, the victory in woman’s suffrage had also encompassed the most fundamental rights of citizenship: the right to control wages, to hold property, to form contracts, to sue, to testify in court. Their struggle was confrontational and violent. And like every revolutionary’s before them, their struggle was personal.”

All Concord and Carlisle residents are invited to attend and participate in our book club meetings. It is not necessary to call one of the co-chairs beforehand – just show up and join in. Our discussions are lively, informative and thoroughly enjoyable. We look forward to seeing many of you on the 28th!

*Anne Hayden & Ginny Lamere
LWVCC Book Club co-chairs*

CONCORD FINANCE COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR 2014 BUDGET

The Concord Finance Committee has been developing the guidelines for the 2014 Schools and Town budgets. A letter was sent on August 3, 2012, to the Selectmen asking for preliminary information about budgetary needs. The following is an excerpt from that request for annual budget data:

“As you know, this year’s budget guidelines setting process will unfold at the same time as construction of the new high school building project is expected to begin, as the Town and the Regional School District continue to analyze how best to meet their obligations regarding their “OPED” (other post employment benefits) liabilities, and amidst national elections and fiscal and macroeconomic uncertainties, with unknown consequences for state and local budgets, interest rates, and the regional economy. As each of these has important consequences for Concord’s taxpayers, we expect that the Guidelines Committee will consider both short- and longer term budget and property tax consequences carefully.”

A similar letter was sent to Supt. Diana Rigby. These letters were then followed by more detailed questions sent to Supt. Diana Rigby and Town Manager Chris Whelan. Their answers to these questions are being discussed at Finance Committee meetings as the process develops. You can access the information and answers submitted by Ms. Rigby and Mr. Whelan at the Town website, Finance Committee.

There is concern that the rate of yearly tax increases to fund the combined Town and School budgets is unsustainable. There are cost drivers that must be funded, such as salary contracts and essential services. At the 2012 Town Meeting, an article was passed asking for five-year projections of costs.

The LWVCC Town Government Initiative Committee will meet on Tuesday afternoon, November 27, at 1:30 p.m. to discuss the

preliminary budgets. Dinny McIntyre, League observer to the Finance Committee, will be our discussion leader. Please join us to become informed as we move towards Town committee hearings and Town Meeting in 2013.

*Ardis Bordman & Susan Sekuler, Co-Chairs
Concord Town Government Initiative Committee*

PETITION ARTICLES FOR TOWN WARRANT

The deadline for submitting a petition Article to the Warrant for Concord’s 2013 Annual Town Meeting is Wednesday, January 2nd, by 4 p.m., the day after New Year’s Day. The Warrant opens on December 3, 2012, at the Selectmen’s meeting.

As described on the Concord Town website, “A petition Article should be carefully considered to ensure that the action it proposes is legal and proper to be brought before the Town and if so, that the language of the Article is phrased properly to accomplish its intended purpose. It is suggested that a petition Article be discussed with the appropriate Town officials at least two weeks before the closing of the Warrant to resolve any misunderstandings on the part of the petitioners.”

We suggest drafting an Article early to allow time to answer questions and meet with appropriate persons about the intent and precise wording of the Article. This allows time for discussions and minor changes if needed in an accurate timely manner. A minimum of 10 signatures must be gathered before submitting the Article.

More information about the process is available on the Town website www.concordma.gov, at Important Documents, Town Meeting, and then to Information for Petitioners. The Town Manager’s office at 978-318-3000 can also provide information. In addition, Town Moderator Eric Van Loon is available to assist with the drafting of an Article.

LWVCC has sent a letter to the editor of the Concord Journal with this information.

*Ardis Bordman, Co-Chair
Concord Town Government Initiative Committee*

LWVMA PROGRAM AND ACTION

STATE PROGRAM PLANNING: GETTING READY FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS

The few weeks which follow an election but precede the start of the new legislative cycle are always relatively quiet ones in the State House. Much of our legislators' time will be spent on relatively minor housekeeping matters. While several of the incumbents in the House and Senate remain at their posts, there have been new additions to both houses. In the first few weeks of the next session we can expect new committee assignments, possible changes in office space, and a general shifting of gears.

We should not let the calm deceive us however. Legislators and private citizens alike will be gearing up for the start of the next 2-year cycle. We can expect many pieces of legislation to be filed again, some with new variations and others essentially the same. Now that the election is over there may be more interest in election related bills. Critical environmental legislation will still be out there, and even if the US Congress does not go over the cliff we can expect additional strains on the state budget, many of which will limit our ability to meet basic human needs.

The League Program specialists will continue to monitor, report, and testify where appropriate. At the same time the Massachusetts League is heading for its convention this spring and it is time to review our existing program (positions), all of which are the result of research and study over the years, to see if there are new areas for study or positions which should be updated.

Our League's participation in this process will take place at the League's Program Planning meeting at our January Board meeting. This year the State Board has made some suggestion for possible areas for new study or updating. These suggestions, shown below are in no way binding on the membership nor could they all be adopted, but they do stem from the suggestions from the Program and Action committee as they are issues where the specialists have seen either a gap in our existing

positions or an indication of a new and emerging problem for the state.

- **Suggestions for Possible New Studies**

- Balancing work and family issues – A study to determine the need for state-mandated paid time off for all workers, such as sick leave for self and family members, vacation, or participation in school meetings and elections.
- Use of modern technologies in the voting process – A study to evaluate using the internet and other communication devices in voting and security concerns.
- Human trafficking – A study to develop a position on forced labor and sex trafficking, including the need for special support services and enforcement.

- **Restudies?**

- Land use related to farming and conservation – Update placing emphasis on preservation of farmland, evaluating effects of farming on the environment and wildlife, encouraging responsible backyard gardening, and increased understanding of the economics of farming.
- New technologies in reproduction – Update of Reproductive Choices to include issues relative to in vitro fertilization, surrogate pregnancies, etc.
- Caring for seniors – Update to Basic Human Needs to determine the needs of an aging population, the current availability of services and the ability to link the two.

The complete text of the LWVMA State Program Planning Guide 2013-2015 is available at the LWVMA website. It contains a great deal of material as well as an explanation of the Program Planning Process. All members should become familiar with it as a look at the vast wealth of research done by our predecessors is empowering and awe inspiring.

*Louise Haldeman, member
LWVMA Program and Action Committee*

STATUS OF LWVMA ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES: WASTE

Updating the Bottle Bill: Pending

After passing the Senate, the Bottle Bill failed to make it through the House last spring so we are back to square one – except for lessons learned and an evolving strategy. The Coalition to Pass the Updated Bottle Bill is alive and well and working on how to achieve its goal this time around. LWVMA is a member of this coalition and is involved in the planning sessions. Expect word soon on what's in the works and what we can do to support a renewed effort this legislative session.

E-Waste: Pending

After some progress in the Legislature last session, an E-Waste Bill supported by LWVMA passed the Senate unanimously, but failed to make it to the House floor for a vote. LWVMA is a member of the alliance of organizations, led by Clean Water Action, working to keep toxic E-Waste out of the environment and require meaningful producer responsibility for the collection, transportation and safe disposal of E-Waste. Representatives from Clean Water Action have been meeting with key legislative supporters of e-waste legislation to discuss filing a bill for passage this next session.

Twenty-three states have already passed e-waste EPR bills—Massachusetts and New Hampshire are the only New England States that are not holding producers responsible. This is a sorry circumstance for Massachusetts since we are a state known for being on the leading edge of energy and environmental legislation.

New, Improved Waste Ban Guidelines from DEP: New and Important!

Many residents are unaware that a DEP Waste Ban list prohibits disposal of a range of recyclable and/or toxic materials from the solid waste stream (trash sent to incinerators or landfills).

The list has been growing since the 1990's when it was first established. Easily recyclable items such as newspaper, mixed paper, plastics, glass and cardboard are examples of items banned from disposal in the trash. Public awareness of the waste ban list is low because enforcement of the ban has

been lax to non-existent. Additionally, waste ban guidelines that disposal facilities use to determine a “failed load” allow trash loads with up to 66% of banned material, rendering the ban virtually meaningless even if enforced.

A recent draft of new guidelines from the DEP goes a long way in correcting these flaws, with lowered thresholds for categories of banned items and the aggregate total of banned materials within a load. Strong guidelines are important because waste bans apply to businesses – responsible for more than 50% of the waste stream – as well as residences.

LWVMA and other advocates of stronger waste ban guidelines applaud these changes, but are lobbying the DEP for even lower threshold amounts of banned materials and tighter enforcement requirements. Establishing new waste ban guidelines is within the purview of the DEP, no legislation required. But there will be push back from waste haulers who are accustomed to having trash filled with banned substances accepted by waste facilities without question.

The DEP needs to know that the public supports strong enforcement of waste bans in order to withstand the inevitable pressure from industry to keep the same, weak measures that maintain the status quo. Stay tuned for an Action Alert from LWVMA to find out how you can lend your voice in support of the DEP in its effort to create waste ban guidelines that will make a real difference.

Society has the means to easily separate recyclable and reusable materials from trash so that untold resources, not to mention taxpayer dollars related to waste management, are saved. Doing so would also reduce significant environmental and health impacts related waste. What are we waiting for?

*Launa Zimmaro
LWVMA E-Waste Specialist*

“Running for Office in Concord”

A workshop for Candidates and Campaigners

Thursday, Nov 29, 2012

7:30 – 9:30 pm

Town House Hearing Room

22 Monument Square, Concord MA

Featured Panelists:

Anita Tekle, Town Clerk

Eric Van Loon, Town Moderator

Elise Woodward, Board of Selectmen

Phil Benincasa, School Committee

Linda Escobedo, Housing Authority

The 2013 local election season is just around the corner! All are welcome to attend!

STATE PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Wednesday, January 9, 2013

12 noon – 1:30 pm

63 Coppermine Rd. (Betsy Sluder’s house)

We hope many of you will be able to attend the LWVMA State Program Planning meeting which will be held on Wednesday, January 9th after the League board meeting. Every other year the Mass League gathers input from all local Leagues regarding our State program: does it adequately cover our ongoing areas of concern? Should new areas be added? Should old areas be dropped or modified? The results of all of the local League meetings are evaluated and then recommendations are presented at State Convention regarding specific focus areas for next year and/or new areas that should be studied or updated.

This meeting is our opportunity to provide our thoughts regarding what areas we want to focus on at the state level in the next two years.

Please read Louise Haldeman’s excellent article (LWVMA Program and Action on page 11) in this bulletin for more information about potential areas for focus next year.

CONCORD CITIZEN SURVEY

Every two years, the Town conducts a telephone survey to determine the opinion of residents about how well the Town is providing programs and services. This year’s Citizen Survey is now underway. The Town has contracted with Pacific Market Research to do the actual calling of 375 randomly-selected residents. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete and the responses are anonymous. Information gathered from the Citizen Survey assists the Town in better serving residents. The Town greatly appreciates the input received from those residents taking the survey. Results should be available by the end of December.

Any questions about the Citizen Survey can be directed to Jon Harris, Budget and Purchasing Administrator at 978-318-3039 or jharris@concordma.gov.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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 which have included:

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

Note from Nancy James: *In March of 2011 I excerpted a piece from Kiersten Warning's important work. The DVVAP web site (Google "DVVAP Concord MA" to access the article below in its entirety. It is worth reading.*

By Kiersten Warning, *the director of Concord's Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Program (DVVAP). The below is adapted from a presentation by the author and Chief Leonard Wetherbee of the Concord Police Department to the 5th International Conference on Family Violence on September 25, 2000, in San Diego.*

In communities like Concord, victims of domestic violence face special challenges -- ones which those in less privileged communities may not. Some of the very characteristics we value in our community may act as obstacles when it comes to seeking or being offered help when there is violence in the home. These represent substantial challenges that impact victims' ability to leave their abusers.



Reflection upon the dynamics of Concord as a privileged community (in income, social/professional status, or education) shows the impact this privilege has upon silencing victims. It reveals a list of characteristics that are helpful in explaining the unique challenges of addressing domestic violence in a privileged community such as ours.

In 1999, **one in three crimes against persons reported to the Concord Police involved domestic violence**. The police responded to 4 calls involving elder abuse, 8 calls involving child abuse, and 134 calls involving domestic violence. Domestic violence comprised 7.5% of all department calls. An additional 60 calls were received from Concord residents by the Domestic Violence Victim Assistance Program (DVVAP). Comments by community members indicate that possibly this represents only 50% of Concord's victims.

More information can be found on the Domestic Violence Services Network web site dvvap@concordma.gov or call 978-318-3421.