

CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

Cindy Nock and Dee Ortner, Co-Presidents

October 2013

Dear League members,

We are looking forward to a year of education, study and outreach as well as fun. Already many of you attended our opening membership meetings in Concord at the Community Room at Concord Greene and in Carlisle in the Hollis Room at the Gleason Public Library and helped with voter registration at the schools on parent nights. More about these activities can be found in this bulletin.

This year we will be engaged in studies at the local, state and national levels. Some of these studies are updates on existing positions and some may take longer than one year to complete. Read about these studies in this bulletin and follow their progress online at the LWVCC.org, LWVMA.org and LWV.org websites. Members will be notified of the time and place of information and consensus meetings for each study.

Our Yellow Rose Event committee is looking for members to spread the word about our events to members of our communities who may want to consider joining the League. There are so many amazing women in history (and today!) who have made a difference and whom we can learn about through our League. We need to encourage younger women to get political and learn about political process through the League. Go to our LWVCC.org website for more information about Yellow Rose Events.

The League of Women Voters is dedicated to Making Democracy Work and there is much to be done at all levels of our democratic process - from holding local candidate forums and 'how to run for office' workshops to observing our local government process and lobbying our state and national legislators on issues on which the League has studied and formed positions. In preparation of Annual Town Meetings, we also encourage members to attend BOS, Finance Committee and other Committee meetings throughout the Fall and Winter months and be as informed as possible when we give consideration to League positions on Town Meeting Articles next Spring.

One challenge we face as an organization is the sustainability of our membership and of our dedicated volunteers. Please make it your special mission this year to bring a new member to the League.

We look forward to seeing you at our events, encouraging civic involvement and *making democracy work*.

Yours in League,
Cindy Nock and Dee Ortner, Co-Presidents

LWVCC MEMBER NEWS

With the arrival of fall, the LWVCC begins another year of important work. On September 11th, our members and guests gathered for our annual Autumn Open Meetings.

State Senator Mike Barrett and State Representative Cory Atkins spoke in the morning about current issues in our state. League leaders also spoke about topics we will be addressing this year such as the Concord Government Initiative group's focus on educating ourselves and the public about town government operations and the Environmental Committee's efforts to put the updated bottle bill on the ballot.

Whether you have time to participate in any of the activities or you simply wish to keep informed about them, you are important to the LWV. We are a significant force in our two towns, the state and the country and your support is vital.

Now is the time to renew your membership. If you have not done so, please send a check to LWVCC, P.O. Box 34, Concord, MA 01742 using the form in this Bulletin or go online to our website (www.lwvcc.org) and click "Join Us." You may pay your dues with PayPal or click "PayPal Guest" on the same page, fill in your information and click "Continue" to use a credit card. Please be as generous as you are able as it is our members and friends who make us strong and effective. Any amount is greatly appreciated since most of the dues are used to support the LWVUS and the LWVMA.

For questions or comments, please email us at membership@lwvcc.org. We look forward to hearing from you.

*Paula Vandever, Membership Chair
Committee: Nancy Beeuwkes, Mary
Chapman, Irmi Doane & Barbara Lewis*

LWVCC BY-LAWS COMMITTEE SEEKS MEMBER INPUT

Have you noticed anything in the LWVCC by-laws that you think should be changed? You can find a downloadable file of our by-laws at

http://lwvcc.org/files/bylaws_2009.pdf.

The By-Laws Committee is charged by the Board of Directors with reviewing the League's by-laws, determining whether any changes seem necessary and, if so, recommending amendments. Amendments must be approved by a 2/3 vote at the Annual Meeting of LWVCC members in May 2014. If you have any thoughts about the LWVCC by-laws, please contact one of the By-Laws Committee members. Thank you.

*LWVCC By-Laws Committee
Barbara Anthony, Erin Pastuszewski, Susan
Sekuler, Betsy Sluder*

LWVCC BOOK GROUP OCTOBER 9, 2013 MEETING

On Wednesday, October 9, 2013 the LWVCC Book Group will hold our first meeting of the year in the Trustees Room of the Concord Free Public Library from 10:00-11:30 AM.

We will discuss the fourth book in Robert Caro's series on President Lyndon Baines Johnson – *LBJ: The Passage of Power*. This book covers LBJ's experiences in Washington from 1958-1964 including the 1960 Presidential election, President Kennedy's assassination, and the period immediately following that event when Johnson was able to accomplish some of the major achievements of his presidency.

All members of the Concord and Carlisle communities are invited to come and participate in our book discussions.

Anne Hayden, LWVCC Book Group Chair

**PETITION ARTICLES FOR
CONCORD TOWN WARRANT**

The deadline for submitting a petition Article to the Warrant for Concord's 2014 Annual Town Meeting is Monday, January 6, at 4 p.m. The Warrant opens on December 9, 2013, 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."

The League suggests 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 and timely manner. A minimum of ten (10) signatures must be gathered before submitting the Article.

More information about the petition 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 (moderator@concordma.gov) is available to assist with the drafting of an Article.

Petition Articles for a Special Town Meeting require a minimum of 100 signatures, and it is suggested that one obtains more than that

in case some signatures are discounted because of illegibility.

Ardis Bordman, Chair
LWVCC Concord Government Initiative

**CONCORD SPECIAL TOWN
MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2013**

The Board of Selectmen opened the Warrant for a Special Town Meeting on October 1, 2013. The Warrant will close at 4 pm on October 10th. The purpose of the Special Town Meeting is to consider the purchase of land on Knox Trail for municipal purposes, with possible intent to use a portion of the parcel for parking for Concord school buses. The language of the Article was drafted and a hearing was held on October 7th in the Town House.

**CONCORD ANNUAL TOWN
MEETING MAY 4, 2014**

This year Concord is trying out a new schedule for Annual Town Meeting. The first session will be Sunday, May 4, 2014. There has been a great deal of discussion for a number of years about identifying ways that more citizens can participate in Town Meeting. After much deliberation and community input, the Board of Selectmen have voted to pilot this change this year. When Town Meeting ends there will be ample opportunity for citizens to offer their thoughts about the success and/or drawbacks of having the opening day on a Sunday in May.

BREAKING NEWS ON KNOX TRAIL LAND PURCHASES

Several weeks ago it was learned that the Concord BOS has signed a letter of agreement to purchase a plot of land in Acton on Knox Trail. A Special Town Meeting (December 4, 2013) is needed for Concord citizens to authorize the purchase of this land. At the October 8 meeting, the Concord School Committee voted to approve “use of the Town Meeting 2013 Article 8 funds for the School Department’s portion of land acquisition at Knox Trail in Acton to support School Transportation Department requirements.”

There are a number of details about this proposed land purchase that need to be made clear to Concord citizens before an informed vote can happen at the Special Town Meeting. This includes:

- Who will actually own the land where the school buses would be parked, the Town of Concord or the Concord Public School District?
- Will the School District “buy” its portion of this land from the Town or from the current owner of the site?
- If the Town is the owner of all of the land on the Knox Trail site, can it restrict how the School District uses the land for transportation requirements including possible outsourcing?

More information will certainly be forthcoming from both the Board of Selectmen and the Concord School

Committee. In the next two months we encourage our members to ask questions and become informed about this important local issue.

HOW IS CORRESPONDENCE FROM CITIZENS HANDLED BY TOWN COMMITTEES?

Have you ever wondered if your email to the Board of Selectmen or School Committee was actually received? Have you sent a letter to a committee chair about an issue and later found out that no one on that committee had received a copy? When a committee chair states that he/she has heard from many citizens about an issue, have you wondered what that number actually was?

While all correspondence (letters delivered by hand, posted mail and emails) will not be dealt with in the same manner, it would be valuable for citizens to know what to expect when they send an email or letter to a committee or Town official.

In the coming months, the League will work with Town and School committees to identify what these various policies are, suggest changes that will make them more understandable to the public and help to inform citizens about these procedures.

*Anne Hayden, member
Concord Government Initiative*

CONCORD GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

Ardis Bordman, Chair

TOUR OF MINUTEMAN TECH

Learning of all kinds goes on at Minuteman Tech (Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School). Join the League's Government Initiative group for a tour of the school on Wednesday morning, October 30. This is a chance to see "practical" learning in action -- to look in on the labs, e.g. biotech labs, the cosmetology area, the environmental science lab, the bakery, the automotive shop, or the robotics lab.

Changes are in the works that will have a profound effect on Minuteman. A building project has been progressing for a year, and the Minuteman School Committee is about to make some crucial decisions about not only the building but also the size of the student body and the voting power of each member community. These decisions have financial costs. This is an opportunity for the whole region to reassess this type of education, its benefits, and the students it serves.

On **Wednesday, October 30** we plan:

- To **Meet at 9:30 AM** at Crosby's parking lot to carpool to Minuteman,
- To hear an introduction to the school, its organization, and sources of funding,
- To form smaller groups to tour one of the three main lab clusters,
- To **lunch at the student-run Fife and Drum restaurant** at the school (for about \$7.00),
- To gather after lunch to question and discuss with Administration member(s) educational philosophy and the changes that may take place over the next two to three years,
- To leave the school between 2:00 PM and 2:30 PM.

If you would like to take the tour, call Marge Daggett, 978-287-0252 or email mmdaggett@verizon.net by **October 16, 2013**.

Marge Daggett
Concord Government Initiative

CONCORD TOWN AND SCHOOLS FY15 BUDGET

Our focus this fall is following the budget development process. Both Town and School budgets will be finalized by December. Changes after that usually do not reflect huge shifts of funds. The Concord Finance Committee (FinCom) guideline process is already well underway. The Fin Com has sent questions to both Town and School administrations about their 2015 budgetary needs. The Finance Committee meetings are as follows:

- *October 3: Guidelines meeting; Town Manager response to information requests, and five year projections
- *October 10: Guidelines meeting; School Superintendent response to information requests, and five year projections.
- *October 17: Guidelines meeting, tentative guidelines determined
- *October 24: Meeting, adopt tentative guidelines
- *November 7: Guidelines meeting, Town Manager's and Superintendent's responses to tentative guidelines
- *November 14: Guidelines meeting, review proposed final guidelines
- *November 21: Meeting, adopt final guidelines

Now is the time to start being informed about the 2014 Concord Annual Town Meeting and the budgets that will be presented to us for approval. It is the most effective time to bring your questions to the Finance Committee, either in person, or by letters and email. Please try to attend the October 3 and October 10 meetings as at that time the budgets are still being formed.

Concord Finance Director Tony Logalbo has agreed to meet with the Concord Government Committee on October 15, 1:30 pm, first floor meeting room at Keyes Road, to give a brief history of the charter, the financial organization of the Town, and the budget process. In advance of the meeting, please send questions for him to Ardis Bordman.

*Ardis Bordman, Chair
Concord Government Initiative*

**IT IS IMPORTANT FOR CITIZENS TO
ATTEND FINANCE COMMITTEE
MEETINGS.**

**THIS IS WHERE BUDGET NUMBERS
ARE SET FOR THE TOWN AND THE
SCHOOLS.**

**AFTER THESE MEETINGS, THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE MAY
ADJUST THE BUDGET NUMBER BUT
IT WOULD NOT BE A
SUBSTANTITVE CHANGE.**

**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK
OBSERVERS NEEDED**

The letterhead of our League includes our logo and the above phrase, *Making Democracy Work*, in red letters. The League

believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government and that governmental bodies must protect the citizens' right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League has a tradition of having observers at public meetings to learn how government works and about issues that are or may become items for local study or action based upon positions. The Concord Government Initiative group has a few observers and would like to have more. An observer attends meetings, takes notes and brings to the attention of the board issues of importance to the League. For example, an observer notes whether open meeting procedures are followed when a board or committee goes into executive session. Observers may ask questions for clarification, information, or knowledge, but must keep an impartial attitude. Observers do not speak for the League without board approval.

Some boards/committees require a serious time commitment, others much less so. In recent years, some committees now meet in the mornings, perhaps at 8 a.m. once a month, so if evening meetings are not for you, there are other options. Please consider whether you would like to be an observer. If you can attend perhaps 10-12 meetings a year (monthly), or weekly (Selectmen), it is a real service to the League and good government. You might even find that you enjoy it so much you will want to volunteer to be on a committee, another League tradition! Contact Ardis Bordman at 978.369.7914, or TownInitiative@lwvcc.org to discuss joining the League observers.

*Ardis Bordman, Chair
Concord Government Committee*

**CONCORD COMMITTEE
PARTICIPATION**

Many Town boards and committees have vacancies at one time or another. Some require a serious time commitment, others much less so. Some committees now meet in the mornings, perhaps at 8 am once a month, so if evening meetings are not for you, there are other options. Vacancies are posted on town bulletin boards and the Board of Selectmen may state at their meetings what boards/committees need volunteers. Certain boards need a mix of experience or professional experience and/or other qualifications, but expressing interest by submitting a “green card” is a first step.

The “green card” origins may be lost to history however it was (and is) literally a green paper card (now also electronic) that

citizens can fill out to express interest. When someone says, “Just fill out a green card” it means just that, either on paper or electronic to volunteer your services. Be forewarned that getting involved in a committee may lead to a lifetime of service!

The Concord Town website notes, “The Town of Concord depends upon the immense talents of our citizens to help govern and is always seeking interested townspeople to serve on boards and committees, as well as carry out short-term projects.” To access the site, go to Board of Selectmen, Town Vacancies/Green Card http://www.concordma.gov/Pages/Concord_MA_BOS/vacancies?textPage=1.

Louise Haldeman registering voters this fall

IT'S TIME TO TAKE THE UPDATED BOTTLE BILL TO A VOTE!

The news of the hour is about the campaign to get the update of the Bottle Bill on the ballot. The LWVMA is one of the lead organizations in the Coalition that launched the ballot initiative and has pledged to collect between 10,000 – 20,000 signatures from 9/16 through 11/03.

Local Leagues across the state, the LWVCC among them, have stepped up to the challenge gathering 5,000 signatures by 9/23/13!

The environmental and cost impacts of a billion discarded containers a year in Massachusetts alone make the update an important advocacy issue. The fact that the Updated Bottle Bill has been pending in the State House for over 10 years without making it to the floor for a vote, in spite of the overwhelmingly support of Massachusetts residents, municipalities and legislators, makes this a cause relevant to our democracy.

The League was there for passage of the original Bottle Bill in 1983 and has been working for an update to include non-carbonated beverages like water, sports

drinks, flavored teas and juices in the deposit system for over a decade.

As one of the largest Leagues in the state, the LWVCC has pledged to collect 1,000 - 2,000 signatures by Nov. 3rd. The LWVCC needs its membership to collect signatures to get the Updated Bottle Bill on the ballot. Do your part in Making Democracy Work by pledging to get a full sheet of signatures. Visit your friends, family and neighbors and ask them to sign the petition. Let's put all of those containers littering our streets, ball parks and rivers where they can do some good – into the deposit system for redemption and recycling.

It took us 144 years to get the vote. The League doesn't quit; it never gives up. Let's get this done. To sign up for materials and training, go to: <http://lwvma.org/updated-bottle-bill-volunteer-form/>. For up-to-date information about the campaign, the need for the Updated Bottle Bill and more, go to: <http://lwvma.org/member-resources/updated-bottle-bill-resources/>. For questions, go to UBB@lwvcc.org.

*Launa Zimmaro, LWVMA Specialist
Energy & Resource Conservation*

Save the Date! Sunday November 3, 2012 7:00 pm – 9 pm Cary Hall, Lexington

The LWVCC is proud to be a co-sponsor of *Breaking New Ground*, a presentation by [Lester R. Brown](#). Recognized as an icon of the sustainability and environmental movement and considered “one of the world’s most influential thinkers” by the Washington Post, Lester Brown has worked tirelessly to educate the public regarding climate change and to “provide a vision and a road map for achieving an environmentally sustainable economy.” This event is sponsored by the Lexington Global Warming Action Coalition (LexGWAC), Sustainable Lexington and LexFarm, and is free to the public. For additional details, go to: <http://lexgwac.org/?p=1490>

VOTER SERVICE

Barbara Lewis (Carlisle) and Erin Pastuszenski (Concord)

Voter Service is central to the League of Women Voters' mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government. LWVCC's Voter Service includes a variety of voting and election-related activities, including providing information on voting and elections, organizing voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts, publishing voter guides, sponsoring candidate forums (local, state legislative and Congressional), and working on other League projects that inform our communities about government and encourage residents to get involved.

LOOKING AHEAD

We have a number of Voter Service activities coming up, and the more volunteers we have, the more we can accomplish. If one of these projects piques your interest, please volunteer or ask for details.

Running for Office Concord/Carlisle. To help interested citizens prepare for a run for local office next spring, LWVCC plans to offer workshops or forums on running for office in Concord (early December) and Carlisle (January) again this year. The offices up for election in Concord in 2014 are Town Moderator and one seat each on the Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Housing Authority. In Carlisle, offices on the ballot will be Town Moderator, Board of Selectmen (2), Board of Assessors (1), Board of Health (1), Housing Authority (1), Library Trustees (1), Planning Board (2) and School Committee (2). If you could help plan this program, please email VoterService@lhwcc.org or contact Erin or Barbara.

Spring Elections and Town Meetings.

Every year, the League mounts a campaign to encourage Concord and Carlisle voters to learn about local candidates and issues, vote in the town elections and participate in town meeting. The effort includes a variety of publicity, outreach and events including candidate forums, letters to the editor, press releases and signs. If you would like to lend a hand or if you have ideas about new ways of informing and motivating voters, please write to VoterService@lhwcc.org or call one of our Voter Service Directors.

RECAP: 2013 SUMMER AND FALL PROJECTS

The League continued its voter registration efforts through last summer and into the fall and encouraged voters to turn out for the Special Election for U.S. Senate on June 25.

At the **Concord-Carlisle High School Senior BBQ** at Emerson Field on June 6, Robert Hilsinger and Erin Pastuszenski helped 17 students complete voter registration forms, congratulated the new voters and answered questions from students and from parent organizers. The League volunteers were delighted when the leader of the rock band entertaining the students reminded all 18-year-olds to stop by the League of Women Voters table to register to vote. Check out the photo taken by a CCHS Parent Teacher Group member that day.

The League booths at **Carlisle's Old Home Day** (June 29) and **Concord's Picnic in the Park** (July 4) offered voter registration and League information and highlighted LWV election law reform initiatives. Interest in registering was light, which was not

surprising in a year without fall elections. One person registered to vote at Old Home Day and six, including one new citizen, registered at Picnic in the Park. Many thanked us for being there and for our efforts to educate citizens and inform voters about elections, issues and candidates.

League volunteers for the Carlisle Old Home Day included Lauren Bakewell, Marilyn Harte, Jane Innamorati, Cindy Nock, Erin Pastuszewski and Patty Rosenthal. For Picnic in the Park in Concord, our volunteers were Anita Barker, Judy Hill, Robert Hilsinger, Barbara Lewis, Lydia Lodynsky, Dee Ortner, Rebecca Purcell, Terry Riopka and Julie Rohwein. Thank you all for helping out with our League booths at these festive town events.

LWVCC's "sign team" volunteers posted LWV VOTE Tuesday signs in Concord and Carlisle before the June 25 **Special Election** in which Gabriel Gomez (R) and Ed Markey (D) vied to win the U.S. Senate seat left vacant when John Kerry became U.S. Secretary of State. Our thanks to the sign team members: Enid Boasberg, Ardis Bordman, Irmi Doane, Carol Dwyer and Erin Pastuszewski in Concord and Barbara Lewis and Cindy Nock in Carlisle.

Finally, this fall, our League staffed tables at nine **Back-to-School Nights in Concord and the Elementary School Parents' Night in Carlisle**, including one session on **National Voter Registration Day** on September 24. Though the number of new registrations (34) fell below our 2012 totals, we got lots of feedback from parents who appreciated the service being available and convenient for those who were new to town or who had not registered before.

We realize that the schools and parents now look for the League's table at back-to-school

nights, and we thank all of our volunteers who make it possible. This year's volunteers included Anita Barker, Janet Beyer, Ardis Bordman, Nancy Cronin, Irmi Doane, Louise Haldeman, Judy Hill, Robert Hilsinger, Jen Johnson, Barbara Lewis, Dee Ortner, Erin Pastuszewski, and Launa Zimmaro. Thanks to all!

VOTER RIGHTS

The League of Women Voters plays an important role in protecting the rights of voters, particularly in the face of efforts to thwart those rights, as is reflected on the home pages at www.lwv.org and www.lwvma.org. To raise awareness and engage League members and the public about protecting voter rights and the integrity of elections, LWVCC is undertaking a Voter Rights initiative. If you would like to get involved with planning the January Member Breakfast speaker program described below or any other part of this initiative, please contact VoterService@lwvcc.org or 978-287-0049.

In September, LWVCC submitted a letter to the editors of our local newspapers in support of amendments to the federal Voting Rights Act, which are now needed as a result of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* eliminating important protections for voters. The letter appeared in the *Carlisle Mosquito*.

A committee is forming to work on a speaker program on "Protecting Voter Rights" or a related topic for the LWVCC January Member Breakfast. We are identifying and inviting speakers and defining the scope of the program. If you would like to help in any way with the speaker program, please contact VoterService@lwvcc.org.

Coming soon is a new Voter Rights webpage on our website (www.lwvcc.org) that will include links to state and national LWV websites. We plan to update the page throughout the year and feature highlights on LWVCC's home page. If you have a flair for writing online and an interest in this issue, please let us know.

We expect that bills on voter rights and election law reform will emerge and move toward a vote over the course of this year, some of which LWVUS (on the federal level) or LWVMA (on the state level) will actively support or oppose. We plan to organize and coordinate advocacy for LWVUS-supported federal legislation on voting rights and for any LWVMA-supported state legislation on election laws, using action alerts and other guidance from the national and state Leagues to time and target our efforts. LWVCC can make a difference by engaging LWV members and the general public. Our tools may include internal and external communications, advocacy workshops, attendance at hearings or rallies and visits to legislators.

Please volunteer to be part of this effort. Thank you!

*Barbara Lewis, Chair
Voter Rights Committee*

UPDATE ON ANIMAL MANAGEMENT POSITION

At our 2013 Annual Meeting, we voted to update of our local position on animal management. Our current position deals entirely with dogs and the need to vaccinate both dogs and cats against rabies. There is nothing in our position which deals with the larger questions of how we live with our four-footed neighbors both domestic and wild.

Yet Concord and Carlisle, which are far more heavily wooded than they were even a half century ago, provide homes for a number of "wild" animals. Deer are the most conspicuous but smaller animals such as coyotes are on the rise and raccoons, foxes, skunks, etc. have always been around. The number of deer in particular has increased markedly as they are minimally hunted by humans, have plenty of food, and lack a large population of their chief predators - wolves and cougars.

Our towns have large numbers of backyard gardeners and a few working farms, and many people keep chickens. How do humans manage the relationship between free-range chickens and the hungry and exceedingly clever foxes? How can we raise lettuce and tomatoes and not feed the woodchucks? The stray cat that may be the bane of bird feeders is also a welcome control on the population of mice and other small rodents. Should there be a difference in licensing requirements between a "working dog," such as a sheep dog, and a "pet" dog? How do we accommodate service animals, dogs and others?

This study could prove very interesting. It will involve considerable research into existing town and state laws on animal and wildlife management and could ultimately recommend some changes to our League program. A core group of people have signed up but more participants are definitely welcome. I hope to get underway this October. A great deal of the work can be done independently with an occasional get-together to share. Please call me at (978) 369-8562 or email me at louise4292@earthlink.net if you are interested in joining us.

*Louise Haldeman, Chair
LWVCC Animal Management Update*

**CASINOS NEAR THE FINISH LINE
CAN THEY STILL BE STOPPED?
SHOULD WE TRY?**

The date on which the State Gaming Commission will award the three casinos and one slot parlor license is fast approaching. The intention is to grant the slot parlor license before the end of this year and the casino licenses in 2014. Many communities have held referendums; some have embraced the proposals while in others the plans have been soundly rejected. The question of whether the whole city of Boston counted as a community was settled on September 24th when the Boston City Council decided that only East Boston could vote.

That will leave the most watched casino race in the state as a contest between Suffolk Downs in East Boston, the Wynn Resorts proposal in Everett, a few yards away over open water, and a Foxwoods proposal in Milford.

As always, the attraction of casinos is the promise of jobs and revenue for the host community. Jobs there will certainly be in construction and if a casino is successful, there will be many other jobs as well. The revenue is less sure. The experience in other cities has shown that all too often the promised revenue is not sustainable. The worry of course remains the same. Increased traffic, negative impact on local business, increases in crime and addiction.

Although the proposals all purport to address the issues of gambling addiction and

adequate security, these facts are still a major concern. There is a valiant group composed of many of the people who opposed the casino legislation in the first place who are conducting a petition drive to place the repeal of the casino law on the ballot in 2014. The LWVMA opposed the legislation but has taken no position on the repeal. In the opinion of the Casino Specialist who happens to be myself, this action borders on the quixotic. We are far into the process and by the time a ballot measure could come before the public most licenses would have been awarded. The AG initially rejected the proposal to repeal because it would involve an uncompensated land taking. Although a court injunction reinstated it, there is not much likelihood that it will make it to the ballot. The League already has a big commitment to the signature drive for the returnable bottle bill and that seemed a better use of our time.

However, I strongly urge all who are interested to sign the repeal petition and even to gather signatures if you are so inclined. Just be sure that you do not give the impression that you are doing it for League. Signing the petition even if it goes nowhere gives a strong signal that you are not satisfied with casino gambling as a solution to the state's economic problems. Go to www.RepealTheCasinoDeal.org for more information.

*Louise Haldeman
LWVMA Casino Gambling Specialist*

