

# BULLETIN

LWVCC Website: [www.lwvcc.org](http://www.lwvcc.org)

Fall 2019

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

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## CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

25 Mon. Observer Corps, 7:30-9 pm

### DECEMBER

3 Tue. Environment Committee, 1-2:30 pm  
 4 Wed. Board Meeting, 9 am-12 pm  
 4 Wed. December Luncheon, 12 pm  
 13 Fri. Carlisle Town Government, 9:30-11 am  
 11 Wed. Education Committee Coffee, 3-4:30 pm  
 16 Mon. Communications Committee, 3:30-5 pm  
 17 Tue. Town Government Committee, 1:30-3:30 pm  
 TBD TBD League Phonathon

### JANUARY

7 Tue. Environment Committee, 1-2:30 pm  
 8 Wed. Board Meeting, 9 am-12 pm  
 10 Fri. 1<sup>st</sup> Friday, 9:15-11:30 am, “Trash Talk”  
 14 Tue. Town Government Committee, 1:30-3:30 pm  
 16 Thu. Immigration Committee, 2-4 pm  
 20 Mon. Communications Committee, 3:30-5 pm  
 25 Sat. Winter Breakfast, 8-11 am

*Members are welcome at monthly Board meetings.*

*Please contact the President if you would like to attend.*

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.

President	Julie Rohwein	<a href="mailto:President@lwvcc.org">President@lwvcc.org</a>
Membership	Anne Hayden	<a href="mailto:Membership@lwvcc.org">Membership@lwvcc.org</a>
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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**Julie Rohwein**



Schoolhouse Rock hit the airwaves when I was twelve years old. When the third series, “America Rock,” arrived in time for the bicentennial of the United States, I was in high school, and before I had taken a government class, I could sing “I’m Just a Bill” and “The Preamble to the Constitution.” I still can.

Having the Preamble firmly embedded in my memory, I sometimes reflect on its words in idle moments. Events of recent months have particularly brought the opening words, “We the People, in order to form a more perfect Union” to my mind. In the time between the writing of those words and the present day, our nation has had to struggle with who is included in “We the People” and what we mean by “a more perfect Union.” Progress has been made, but always with an undertow of “the way things used to be” tugging in reverse.

Women were among those who aspired to join “We the People,” to be included in the “perfect Union,” and to assert their prerogative to fully participate in self-government. This year, we celebrate the centennial of the adoption of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution, which established suffrage for women. We also celebrate the centennial of the founding of the League of Women Voters.

Change can be profoundly unsettling and uncomfortable. Our foremothers were not “nice” ladies. They insisted. They were confrontational. They were vilified. They were arrested. They were spat on and threatened. They struggled and fought to make progress on the road to inclusion in that more perfect union.

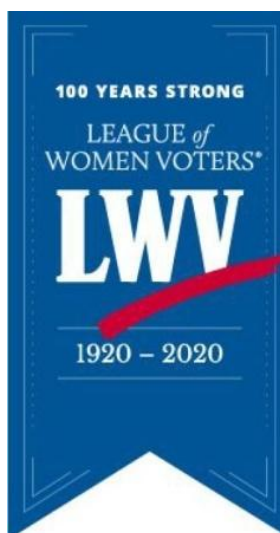
And when the battle in front of them was nearly won, when ratification was finally in sight, from that moment, which might have been seen as an end point, the League of Women Voters was born. The founders of our organization understood that democracy required work, and they shifted from the struggle to obtain the right of participation in self-government to the work of helping citizens participate in self-government. To making democracy work.

The continuation of that work falls to us. One day we will pass it on to our successors. But for now, there is much to do, and in Concord and Carlisle we have many efforts underway, as you will see when you peruse this bulletin. Some, like the Voter Service Committee, the Book Group and the Concord and Carlisle Town Government Committees, continue work of long-standing. Others are newer -- the revived Environment Committee has begun the year with trainings in effective advocacy on climate issues, we have formed a committee to support the U.S. Census in 2020, and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is making plans to celebrate the Centennials with parade appearances and collaborations with other groups in our community. There will be candidate forums in the spring and interesting speakers at our December Luncheon and our Winter Breakfast.

League committees and activities are open to all. We welcome and seek new members. If you see something that interests you, contact the chair of that activity or contact me at [President@lwvcc.org](mailto:President@lwvcc.org) or our membership chair, Anne Hayden, at [Membership@lwvcc.org](mailto:Membership@lwvcc.org). We are delighted to speak with you and help you get connected. *Julie Rohwein, LWVCC President.*

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 100<sup>TH</sup> LWV ANNIVERSARY



By November 1919, California had ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, the eighteenth state to do so, just half of the 36 that would be required for adoption. Two states, Georgia and Alabama, had voted to reject the Amendment. By the end of the summer of 1920, Tennessee voted to ratify and became the 36<sup>th</sup> state to do so, insuring the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment became the law of the land. Six states rejected it. Two more voted to ratify in the next few months. Two states did not hold votes until many years later. Mississippi was the last state to reverse its original rejection, voting to ratify in March of 1984.

We are in the midst of the hundred year anniversary of this process and the centennial of the founding of the League of Women Voters of the United States. This committee is working on plans for observing and celebrating these anniversaries, and the fun has begun. Last summer, member Cindy Nock arranged for a small group of Leaguers

to march as suffragists in the Old Home Day Parade in Carlisle. She has made arrangements for us to do so again in June 2020. We will also be gathering a group to march in the Patriots' Day Parade on April 20, 2020 in Concord.

Members of our committee are collaborating with the Women's Parish Association and other local groups on a *Women's Suffrage Centennial Celebration* in March to highlight the contributions of suffragists and abolitionists in Massachusetts, and to feature ongoing work towards democratic participation for all citizens. The League Book Group will read Elaine Weiss' *The Woman's Hour* in January. Displays are being planned for the libraries and the Concord Bookshop later in the year. Carlisle members are planning movie nights and potlucks with the opportunity to make signs, yellow roses, and "Votes for Women" sashes. They are also exploring opportunities to collaborate with the Gleason Library and the Carlisle Historical Society, and they are recommending books on the suffrage movement for Carlisle Reads.

The 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is open to all members of the League. If you are interested in helping to plan, or if you want to be notified when an activity or event is coming up, email Julie at [President@lwvcc.org](mailto:President@lwvcc.org). *Julie Rohwein, 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Chair.*

### COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Committee meets on the third Monday of every month. Recently we reviewed flyers for upcoming events, discussed the use of email distributions and other promotion efforts, and organized this Bulletin. And thanks to our webmaster Cynthia Rainey, Monday Member News continues to be the main avenue for weekly League information. Check the League website for our calendar, as well as reports on current and past events. Note: the link to our calendar is called "Key Dates" [my.lwv.org/massachusetts/concord-carlisle/key-dates-0](http://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/concord-carlisle/key-dates-0). *Karlen Reed, Communications Chair.*

**Karlen Reed**



## COMPLETE COUNT

LWVCC has established a Complete Count Committee whose goal is to inform and educate our communities about the 2020 Census and assist efforts in Concord and Carlisle as well as in historically undercounted nearby communities to increase the count in next year's census. This is



the first time that our National Census, which occurs every ten years, can be filled out online. LWVUS is encouraging local and state Leagues all over the country to work with local governments, community organizations, religious institutions, and the public to increase the count on next year's 2020 census. Our League has accepted that challenge with great gusto!

We will hold a meeting in December for all members who would like to assist in these efforts (details will be posted in MMN and on the website). See related article below ("Fall Gathering"). If you would like to be kept informed of our activities, contact Anne at [Membership@lwvcc.org](mailto:Membership@lwvcc.org). *Anne Hayden & Ellen Quackenbush, Complete Count Committee Co-Chairs.*

## EDUCATION

The Education Committee has been busy this fall on many fronts. We **toured the brand new Minuteman High School on Sunday, November 17th**. A student guide led us on a one-hour tour. On **Wednesday, December 11th, from 3:00 - 4:30**, the Education Committee will host an afternoon of coffee and conversation about the progress of the Concord Middle School Building Committee. Please join us. Members of the Building Committee will be available to answer your questions and to listen to your ideas and concerns. Watch MMN for the location.

**Education Committee members Julie Rohwein, Susan Frey, and Edie Lipinski (Chair)**



The Education Committee will host a **First Friday Forum on Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> on the Middle School Building process** in collaboration with the Concord Town Government Committee. We hope to provide an opportunity for the general public to learn and to pose questions to the Building Committee members.

We started meeting with LWV representatives from Sudbury, Wayland, and Weston to plan the **2020 Civics Bee to be held Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Lincoln-Sudbury High School**. In February, members of the committee will once again present a lesson on the history of the right to vote to all eighth grade students at Concord Middle School. We appreciate your participation and input as we prepare for these events. Please let me know if you are interested in helping. For more information, please contact Edie at [education@lwvcc.org](mailto:education@lwvcc.org). *Edie Lipinski, Education Committee Chair.*

## ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Environment Committee, together with the Concord Town Government Committee, presented the October First Friday on Transportation (see “First Friday” article below). The panelists and audience discussed the challenges of increasing traffic, poor public transportation options, and the need for bike lanes in Concord. In October, Paul Dale, Energy Chair of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club, gave two climate advocacy training presentations: one

**Janet Rothrock**



at Concord Carlisle High School and the other at the Concord Children's Center. Mr. Dale discussed the immediacy of climate change, how the Massachusetts legislature works (or doesn't), and how citizens effect change: by lobbying their own representatives and senators, encouraging residents in other districts to lobby their legislators, and by making changes at the local level and pressing the governor to adopt those changes statewide.

Mr. Dale also mentioned that in 2008 Massachusetts passed the Global Warming Solutions Act that requires the governor to enact a comprehensive regulatory program to address climate change. We should press Governor Baker to use his power to make these changes. *Janet Rothrock and Alice Kaufman, Environment Committee Co-Chairs.*

## LWVCC BOOK GROUP

In November we discussed “What the Eyes Don’t See,” by Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, about the Flint, Michigan tap water battle. Our January book will be “The Women’s Hour,” by Elaine Weiss. “Following a handful of remarkable women who led their respective forces into battle, along with appearances by Woodrow Wilson, Warren Harding, Frederick Douglass, and Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Woman’s Hour* is an inspiring story of activists winning their own freedom in one of the last campaigns forged in the shadow of the Civil War, and the beginning of the great twentieth-century battles for civil rights.” (Goodreads Review). In March, we will discuss “Walden Warming, Climate Change Comes to Thoreau’s Woods,” by Richard Primack. Come join us for these discussions. *Mary Sterling, Book Group Chair.*

**Mary Sterling**



**Anne Hayden**



## MEMBERSHIP

Have you renewed your LWVCC membership? We hope you want to maintain your membership so that you will be updated regularly on our activities, informed about current issues through Monday Member News and the Bulletin, and get involved in the League activities and concerns that are important to you. You can renew your membership through PayPal on our League website or you can send a check for dues (\$55 for single membership, \$80 for household) to LWVCC Treasurer, P.O. Box 34, Concord, MA 01742. Have you been a member of the League for 50 years (any combination of chapter or National memberships)? If so, please contact Anne at [Membership@lwvcc.org](mailto:Membership@lwvcc.org). *Anne Hayden, Membership Chair.*

## OBSERVER CORPS

The League Observer Corps monitors the work of many town and school committees. The Observer Corps is looking for more people to serve as substitute Observers who can watch the meetings either in person, on TV, or on their computers. If you are interested, please contact Diane at [observercorps@lwwcc.org](mailto:observercorps@lwwcc.org). *Diane Proctor, Observer Corps Chair.*

### Observer Corps Report: Financial Audit Advisory Committee (FAAC)

At its September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting, the FAAC reviewed the Concord Municipal Light Plant (CMLP) CY 2018 Financials and Management Letter with the auditors. Of note was the distinction made between CMLP's Light operations and Broadband operations. Auditors recommended allocating the net pension and OPEB liabilities between Light and Broadband operations. Also, the auditors proposed that CMLP create a formal agreement between Light and Broadband to acknowledge the \$1.7 million loan from Light to Broadband and the repayment terms and loan limits (repayment is interest-free). According to the auditors, the net financial positions of Light and Broadband are \$46.6M and -\$358K, respectively. The CMLP has agreed to do so, and the Chair said formalizing the loan makes the transaction more transparent. Auditors found no material weaknesses in the CMLP audit, though improvement in operations could be made. The CMLP retirement pension is 91% funded. The auditors also recommended that CMLP maintain three months' operating expenses as unrestricted cash, which amounts to \$2.6 million. This is less than the current unrestricted cash balance of \$5.59 million as of December 31, 2018.

**Diane Proctor**



The FAAC also discussed the timing of the Town's audit and the CCRSD (Concord-Carlisle Regional School District)'s audit. Town's draft audit report should be done by November, so a December FAAC meeting to review the draft Town audit report is timely. The CCRSD' draft audit report should be ready in December, also. The next FAAC meeting is December 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. The FAAC webpage is [www.concordma.gov/1137/Financial-Audit-Advisory-Committee](http://www.concordma.gov/1137/Financial-Audit-Advisory-Committee). *Karlen Reed and Sprague Huntington, Observers.*

**Ardis Bordman**



### TOWN GOVERNMENT-CONCORD

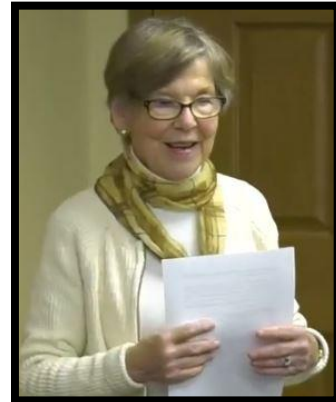
The Concord Town Government Committee held two information-packed First Friday meetings in October about Transportation and in November about the Community Preservation Act. See "First Friday" articles below. The next First Friday, "Trash Talk," is Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, where we will look at where we are on this important issue—both locally and globally, and what changes are pending due to ever shrinking options for recycling and disposal. This meeting will be held for the first time at the West Concord Union Church. On February 7<sup>th</sup> we will take up the topic of "Education in Concord and the Middle School Plans." The Town

Government "Housing Issues" sub-committee met monthly during the fall, offering the Concord Planning Board constructive feedback on two zoning articles about housing for the annual Town Meeting 2020. Additionally, the Housing Issues sub-committee is compiling information on

lands in Concord which are owned by government or non-profits and could be used to build affordable housing.

In January we begin the countdown to Town Meeting which opens Monday, April 27, 2020. The Warrant for Town, School, and Petition Articles opens December 7, 2019 and closes January 10, 2020. Public Hearings on proposed Articles will begin February 24, 2020. Town Government winter and spring committee meetings will review and discuss the Articles. Understanding Town Meeting Articles is critical since the challenge for voters is to decide how to have the government we need, AND how to achieve it without overrides which could jeopardize the ability of taxpayers to remain Town residents. We welcome you to our discussion meetings. Check the LWVCC website and Monday Member News for details on locations and times. *Ardis Bordman and Dorrie Kehoe, Concord Town Government Committee co-Chairs.*

**Dorrie Kehoe**



**Cindy Nock**



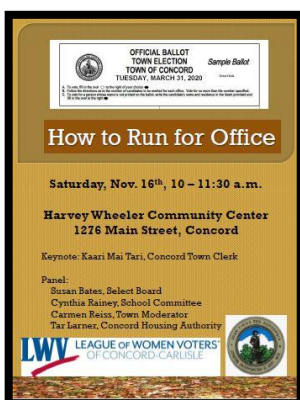
## TOWN GOVERNMENT-CARLISLE

The Carlisle Group meets on the **Second Friday** of the month from 9-11 a.m. in the Nickles Room, Carlisle Town Hall. Notices will be posted to the group on the Carlisle Group Facebook page and via email. The Carlisle Group has planned a series of events in Carlisle to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. The Carlisle Historic Society held an Open House on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> at the Heald House where items pertaining to the Women's Suffrage movement in Carlisle were displayed.

There will be a viewing of the Ken Burn's documentary *Not for Ourselves Alone* about Elizabeth Candy Stanton and Susan B Anthony on two nights in January. In February, the movie *Iron Jawed Angels* (about Alice Paul and the Suffragists who finally got the 19th Amendment to pass in Congress) will be shown. A book read, a picnic, and several crafting sessions to make yellow roses and "VOTES FOR WOMEN" sashes will happen in March, April, and May. A very special parade entry is being planned for Carlisle Old Home Day in June. *Cindy Nock, Carlisle Town Government Chair.*

## VOTER SERVICE

The Voter Service team has been busy staffing the voter service tables at the Concord Museum, the back-to-school nights, and at Ag Day. On November 16<sup>th</sup>, the LWVCC and the Concord Town Clerk's Office co-sponsored a forum on "How to Run for Office." The forum speakers were Kaari Tari (Town Clerk), Susan Bates (Select Board), Cynthia Rainey (School Committee), Carmen Reiss (Town Moderator) and Tar Larner (Housing Authority). The Town Clerk provided insights and perspectives on Town government structure, campaign finance requirements, how to be nominated, and the election cycle. The panel shared their experiences in



deciding to run, getting on the ballot, organizing and conducting a campaign, financing a campaign, and more. Also, Voter Service will be conducting a candidates' forum and developing and distributing a voters' guide for Concord's March 31<sup>st</sup> local election. Please contact Judy or Susan at [VoterService@lwcc.org](mailto:VoterService@lwcc.org) if you would like to volunteer for these or other voter service opportunities. *Judy Zaunbrecher and Susan Frey, Voter Service Co-Chairs.*

**Susan Jancourtz and Janet Mendelsohn at the Alcott Voter Service table**



## **FIRST FRIDAYS**

### **October – Transportation: Getting Around**

The challenge of getting around Concord and the region is growing due to an ever increasing volume of cars on roadways. In response, the LWVCC sponsored a forum on October 4<sup>th</sup> as part of the League's Town Government Committee First Friday series. The forum highlighted local, state, and regional transportation concerns. LWVCC President Julie Rohwein opened the discussion and Moderator Alice Kaufman framed the topic. LWVCC member Janet Rothrock introduced the speakers: State Representative Tami Gouveia, Lizzi Weyant, Director of Government Affairs for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Scott Zadakis, Executive Director of CrossTown Connect Transportation Management Association, Richard Reine, Director, Concord Public Works, and Lieutenant Kevin Monahan, Concord Police Department.

State Representative Gouveia focused on commuter issues and a transportation bill. Ms. Weyant took a quick poll regarding the gas tax and the audience's tolerance for an increase in the gas tax to relieve local transportation issues.



**Alice Kaufman, Tami Gouveia, Rich Reine, Julie Rohwein, Lt. Monahan, Lizzi Weyant, and Scott Zadakis**

Most of the audience appeared willing to accept a gas tax increase if it eased the traffic. Ms. Weyant explained that traffic issues are all encompassing and noted the connection between transportation and the local economy.

Mr. Zadakis provided an update on Concord's grant application through CrossTown Connect for an in-town, shuttle bus route connecting the two commuter train stations in Concord and West Concord with several key business and tourist destinations. This route would focus on daily trips, suburb to suburb

commuting, and traveling to and through the Concord area. The proposed route would start at the MBTA commuter train station in West Concord and end on Virginia Road, with stops at the MCI-Concord prison, Papa Razzi, Welch Foods on Baker Ave., across Route 62 to Old Marlboro Road and the Emerson Hospital. The route crosses Route 2 and continues along Main Street to the Thoreau Depot / MBTA commuter train stop, to Concord Center, the Louisa May Alcott house, the Ripley School, and then onto Virginia Road. Mr. Zadakis said we should hear the results of the grant application in November.



Mr. Reine explained the background and results of Concord’s recent Complete Streets Survey, wikimap, public information and workshop. A “Complete Street” is one that provides safe and

### The Concord Shuttle Proposal



accessible travel options for walking, biking, transit, and vehicles for people of all ages and abilities. Mr. Reine noted that, while autos account for a larger share of the total number of accidents, personal injury occurs more often when pedestrians or bicyclists are involved.

As a result of the survey, the Concord Public Works Department created a prioritization plan designed to address various mobility, safety, and accessibility issues. Year One projects would focus on Hubbard

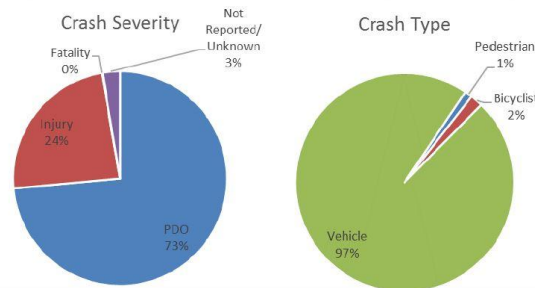
Street, Commonwealth Avenue, and Sudbury Road to create sidewalks, crosswalks, and accessible signage. The Year Two project would reconfigure the Main Street / Cottage Street intersection and curb ramps. The Year Three projects would remedy issues on Walden Street, including construction of crosswalks and a sidewalk from Magnolia Street to the high school.

Lieutenant Monahan announced the publication of a Bike Safety handout that explains bicycling rules and trail etiquette. The audience enjoyed delicious refreshments and asked questions about extending the proposed route for the Concord shuttle, data collection, pedestrian-only areas, road-sharing, infrastructure costs, and regional

solutions to traffic. Ms. Kaufman closed the forum, noting that this program was videotaped by the Town’s public access TV station, Minuteman Media Network. The video, report, and slide presentations are now available on the LWVCC website: [my.lwv.org/massachusetts/concord-carlisle/article/october-first-friday-%E2%80%93-transportation-getting-around](http://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/concord-carlisle/article/october-first-friday-%E2%80%93-transportation-getting-around) . *Karlen Reed.*

### Crashes in Concord 2014-2016

Total Crashes	1130
Property Damage Only (PDO)	831
Injury	268
Fatality	1
Not Reported/ Unknown	30



### November – Community Preservation Act: Past, Evolution, and Present

Under the Community Preservation Act (CPA) of 2000, cities and towns who join can raise funds by up to a 3% surcharge on property tax, and the State Legislature will provide matching funds generated from an additional charge on Registry Filing Fees. Cities and towns decide annually on how their funds are distributed with a required allocation of 10% of the funds for Open Space, Community Housing, and Historic Preservation, while the rest of the funds are

divided as desired among these categories plus Recreation. Each Town has an appointed Community Preservation Committee (CPC) that annually submits a list of projects to be funded for approval at annual town meetings. The November forum included representatives from CPCs in Acton, Lexington, and Concord. Terri Ackerman, former Chair of Concord's CPC and now Select Board member, represented Concord. Marilyn Fenollosa represented Lexington and Ray

**Ray Yacouby, Karlen Reed, Marilyn Fenollosa, and Terri Ackerman field questions on CPA**



Yacouby, Acton. Each speaker summarized how their towns spend their funds and highlighted specific projects.

The Q&A session, moderated by LWVCC member Karlen Reed, offered an opportunity to share more detail on how the CPA program works in each town. The audience learned that Lexington sets aside land for housing as part

of the purchase of land for open space. Lexington and Acton use borrowing as a technique for getting the most out of CPA dollars. It was also noted that towns follow up the progress of previous year grants to be sure they are completed in a timely manner. This program is available on the Town's Minuteman Media Network: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBstdwbHka8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBstdwbHka8). The slide presentations will be posted on the League's website. *Marge Daggett, Dorrie Kehoe, Ardis Bordman, Ingrid Detweiler, and Nancy Brown.*

## DAY ON THE HILL

On October 17<sup>th</sup> LWVCC members attended Day on the Hill and learned about LWVMA's priority legislation: **Election Day Registration (EDR)**: H685/S396 would enable voters to register and vote at the polls on Election Day. **Climate Crisis**: The League is supporting bills that will (i) establish a price on carbon emissions that result in global warming [H2810/S1924]; (ii) develop an implementation roadmap as a framework for transforming our current energy system to one that will support a livable future [H832]; and (iii) transition to clean, safe and renewable thermal energy and protect the public from the dangers inherent in our current natural gas system [H2849/S1940]. **Education Funding: Student Opportunity Act** [H2365] would appropriate \$1.5 billion in new investment in Massachusetts' public education. The Act has passed the Senate. **Reproductive Rights: Roe Act** [H3320/S1209] would expand access to reproductive rights including abortion.

**LWVMA members gathered at the State House**



Senate President Karen Spilka was the keynote speaker and acknowledged the progress women have made in the Legislature, symbolized by her role as President of the Senate, and also predicted that women will ultimately account for at least 50% of the Legislature. She described hurdles she has faced as a woman legislator and praised the work of the League.

Following the formal presentation, League members met with Senator Michael Barrett and Representative Tami Gouveia. Both Senator Barrett and Representative Gouveia expressed their support for the bills that the League is supporting, although Senator Barrett thinks that cap & trade may be a more effective tool than carbon pricing. He predicted that the Senate will do something dramatic on the environment, but thought that at this time there is little likelihood the House will support such measures. Senator Barrett would like to see an independent Climate Policy Commission in Massachusetts that would report on whether Massachusetts is on track to meet its climate goals for 2050. On the national front, he envisioned an effort akin to the 1935 New Deal Works Progress Administration (WPA).

Representative Gouveia spoke about the difficulty of passing measures in the House. She remarked that there is less than a 50% chance the Roe Act will pass and noted the onerous House rules, which prevent measures reaching the floor without the approval of leadership. She shared her personal frustration regarding her inability to be recognized on the floor. Representative Gouveia said that rules reform is critical, but this is unlikely without pressure from constituents. Citizens must understand how the House conducts its business and the impact of its rules on thwarting the will of Massachusetts' voters. We discussed whether there might be a role for the League in observing and publicizing the operations of the House. *Nancy Brown, Stephan Bader, and Nancy Beeuwkes, State Program and Action Chair.*

## **FALL GATHERING: CENSUS 2020** **WITH THE TOWN CLERKS**

At the opening meeting of the LWVCC at Concord Greene on Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, members heard the Town Clerk of Concord (Kaari Mai Tari) and Carlisle's Town Clerk Mary de Alderete discuss the importance and impact of the 2020 Federal Census. Julie Rohwein, League President, moderated the event.

**Kaari Mai Tari**



Julie explained that it is critical to get the 2020 Census right. Census data is the basis for fair political representation, as these data are used to draw district lines reflective of the population. Community leaders use census data to allocate resources, including public safety, planning, and disaster response, education needs, hospitals, assistance for veterans, and transportation. Furthermore, business leaders use the data to make investment decisions. Julie said a citizenship question will not appear on the Census. The National League opposed its inclusion based on the Constitutional language that says we should count all persons—not citizens. The League and many others regarded inclusion of this question as a scare tactic, designed to decrease participation among non-

English speaking and immigrant communities. Even without the question, Julie noted that distrust may prevail among vulnerable people, with the potential to decrease participation.

Julie denoted the three phases of the League of Women Voters 2020 Census support activities:

1. Education and community involvement: helping to spread the word;
2. Get out the Count: becoming a “Census enumerator,” encouraging participation or supporting outreach to undercounted populations; and
3. Watch and report: ensuring the reliability of the process.

The Town Clerks began by differentiating between the Annual Census, which is a Town census overseen by the Towns’ Board of Registrars, and the Federal Census, conducted by the Census Bureau. The Annual Census in Massachusetts is mailed to every household. In Concord the data received determines such things as the voting list, taxes, Town information lists, school enrollment needs, and Council on Aging mailing lists.

**Mary de Alderete**



The Federal Census occurs every ten years, counting all persons living in the United States and the Territories. This decennial enumeration has been in use since 1790. It is based on residency as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. This year, each household will receive a paper form and an electronic form to fill out. Some households will receive a second form if they have not submitted the original form either electronically or by mail, but only one will be counted. If no response occurs, a “Census enumerator” will come to the person’s door.

**Fall Gathering Audience**



The data collected remain confidential for 72 years. Every effort is made to make the data trustworthy because the data are used to draw Congressional and State Senatorial Districts as well as local precinct lines for voting. For the Federal Census, college students and boarding school students are registered in their home towns. The Federal Census impacts the level of federal funding each municipality receives. Over \$675 billion dollars will be disbursed during the next ten years. The data are central to research, decision-making, and planning for both the

public and private sectors.

There are several new aspects of the 2020 Census. Better technologies are available for canvassing and enumerating residences. Satellite images allow Census workers to see all probable residences, while on the ground, workers are helping to differentiate between a shed (unoccupied) and a home (occupied). As well, mathematically rigorous privacy protections, based on “differential privacy” cryptographic algorithms, should prevent access to the data. The Census Bureau has employed hackers to test the system in an effort to ensure that it cannot be hacked.

The Census Bureau will never ask for social security numbers, bank account or credit card numbers, or solicit money or donations. Any person having concern about the legitimacy of a contact or who has any questions should call: 1-800-923-8282 (the Census Bureau). While it is anticipated that Concord and Carlisle will have an 81%-88% response rate, there remains a local need to ensure that every person is counted. Furthermore, it is predicted that Massachusetts will have only a 65% response rate. To learn more about the Census and what the League can do, check these websites: LWVUS Census Issue Page: [www.lwv.org/other-issues/census](http://www.lwv.org/other-issues/census) and LWVUS Census Action Kit: [www.lwv.org/league-management/voting-rights-tools/census-action-kit](http://www.lwv.org/league-management/voting-rights-tools/census-action-kit) *Diane Proctor.*

## **LWVCC MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: MARGE DAGGETT**

As a new feature, the Bulletin will shine a spotlight on a member of LWVCC who has served our community. In 1957 before there were iPhones, email, and the Mac laptop, Marge Daggett was working at the Computation Center at MIT as a programmer. She worked with computers in various capacities until she retired in 1999. Not one to let the world slide by, Marge was also active in the Lexington League and was an elected Town Meeting Member. She joined the Lexington League 50 years ago and was treasurer, co-president, and bulletin editor.

**Marge Daggett**



When she moved to Concord's Newbury Court in 2009, Marge jumped into the Concord-Carlisle League and joined Barbara Anthony on the finance drive. She became a member of the Town Government Committee because "I was interested in town meeting and figured it would be a good way to find out how people in Concord work with their Town Government. I think town government is important and we are trying to educate citizens about it."

Asked why she likes the League, Marge said: "The things the League is interested in are ideas and projects that serve to better our communities. The League seeks to improve living conditions and make things fairer for the people who live in the communities."

She also said, "The people in the League are welcoming and friendly. When I was in college my roommate's mother was president of the Massachusetts League. I met her mother and understood what a well-rounded and interesting woman she was. I knew that was the kind of woman I wanted to be. After I stopped working and the children were grown, I wanted something interesting and I found that the interesting women in town were in the League." *Janet Beyer.*

## **MEET THE TOWN MANAGER**

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, nine League Board members met with Stephen Crane, the new Town Manager in Concord. The meeting provided an opportunity for board members to acquaint him with League areas of interest. The meeting quickly evolved into an in-depth discussion of municipal governance, citizen engagement, and local issues. Julie Rohwein, League president, opened with an introduction of the Board members present and their committee functions and gave a brief description of League process and activities in the area of local government.

**Julie Rohwein with Stephen Crane**



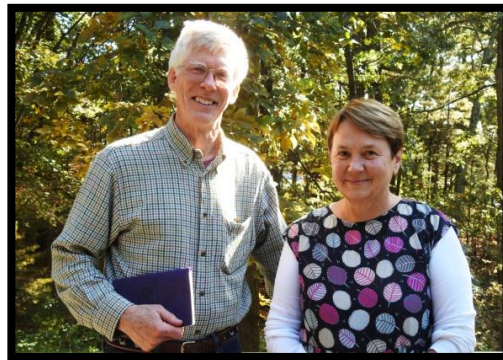
In turn, Mr. Crane provided an overview of his personal and professional background. The meeting then shifted into a dialogue that touched on capital building projects, the Middle School Building Committee priorities, the budget process, regional services, and community participation and education. “I am very fortunate to be here in Concord,” Mr. Crane said. Noting differences between Concord and his previous positions in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Washington, DC, Mr. Crane said “This is a great municipality with

a high level of engagement by the community.” Building relationships is one of his key objectives in reaching out to different segments of the community and will play a crucial role in working effectively towards his vision for the Town. *Julie Rohwein and Karlen Reed.*

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE CHAIRS INTERVIEW**

Dean Banfield (Chair, Concord Finance Committee) and Mary Hartman (Chair, Concord Finance Committee Budget Guidelines Subcommittee) met with several League members October 15 to discuss the Chairs’ views on the following three questions:

**Dean Banfield and Mary Hartman**



1. What do you think is important for Concord from a Finance Committee perspective?
2. What is a fiscally sustainable growth rate for property taxes and how should it be calculated?
3. What do you hope to achieve between now and Town Meeting?

The short answers were: 1. An important Finance Committee effort is to educate Concord citizens and advise the Select Board about the relationship between their votes at Town Meeting to authorize additional “excluded debt” spending measures and the rise in our property tax bills. Excluded debt refers to spending measures that are funded by debt outside of the Proposition 2 ½ limits. This results in a tax increase for the number of years it takes to pay the cost of a funded project, like a school or municipal building. The Finance Committee seeks to advise the Town by developing a metric called a “fiscally sustainable growth rate” (SGR) and by developing a five-year projection of the Town's finances and levy limit.

2. A simple definition of SGR is the rate at which our property taxes can increase towards the levy limit without triggering a Proposition 2 ½ override vote. The SGR that the Finance Committee has developed is a blend of local inflation and future risk-free borrowing costs. This metric will change over time as the local and national economies change.

3. This year's goals for the Finance Committee are to reach an understanding with Town residents about the importance of fiscal responsibility and to set up a dialogue about our choices and their financial implications.

The Chairs said the Finance Committee has been focusing on the Town's operating budget, not on capital expenditures that lead to debt exclusion votes. A debt exclusion is essentially the same as a Proposition 2 ½ override, except: 1) the public has a greater aversion to passing an override than passing a debt exclusion, and 2) once the debt exclusion is paid, the levy limit reverts to the pre-exclusion level; by contrast, a Proposition 2 ½ override vote will increase permanently the level of allowable taxation.

They said that advising the Town on a forward-looking basis using the SGR is a relatively new endeavor for the Finance Committee. This year's SGR is 2.16% (determined by the Finance Committee as a five-year goal) and was included as part of the Finance Committee budget guideline letters to the town manager, CCRSD (regional school district), and Minuteman Regional VocTech High School. This budget guideline does not include any debt exclusion.

Using the analogy of a "canary in the coal mine," Mr. Banfield noted that the continued exhaustion of the levy limit surplus (the buffer between the property tax level and the levy limit) serves as a warning that a Proposition 2 ½ vote may soon be necessary to approve additional Town spending. The Finance Committee is also concerned about tax rate hikes for the economic bottom quintile (20%) of Concord citizens and for the middle class.

**Julie Rohwein speaks to the Finance Committee**



On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Finance Committee hosted a public forum at the Concord Town House on the SGR. Julie Rohwein, LWVCC President, addressed the committee with the League's statement of support for the committee's work. The forum was videotaped by the Town's Minuteman Media Network:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDur89fbpvE> *Karlen Reed and Diane Proctor.*

**A BIT MORE:**

**Note:** The 2019 Winter Bulletin will be released in January. All reports and photographs for the Winter Bulletin are due by January 9, 2020. Thank you as always to the contributors and reviewers. *Karlen Reed, Bulletin Editor.*

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