

BULLETIN

League of Women Voters
Arlington, Massachusetts
www.lwva.com

January 2020

Calendar

1/7	Thursday 7 p.m.	LWVA Board meeting at Phyllis Maddox's home, 55 Hillside Ave. All members welcome. Directions on page 2.
1/20	Monday 7:30 p.m.	The annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Observance in Town Hall. Doors open at 6:45, and the program begins at 7:30. Details on page 3.
1/28	Tuesday 7 p.m.	Democracy After Dark presents "2020 Census: History, Context, and How It Affects Arlington," Robbins Library Community Room. The League of Women Voters is an official partner organization of the U.S. Census Bureau for the 2020 Census, so this may be of interest. Details on last page.

Arlington League Helps with Cambridge Tenants Election

By Patti Muldoon

The League stands ready to help Arlington and Cambridge public housing and voucher tenants associations in running fair and impartial elections, as we have for many years.

The Arlington League was again asked to be the impartial third party to tally the election for the Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT). Why us? Sadly, Cambridge has not had its own league for many years, so we help out.

Counting the ballots presented unusual challenges. The tally had to be postponed because ballots in the mail were inexplicably detained by the post office. Furthermore, voters were confused about the number of candidates they could vote for.

ACT represents thousands of tenants. Their ballot had over 60 candidates for 30 board positions plus four policy questions for their voters. I was impressed that all the races were contested by such a large field of candidates.

Counting, then reporting the results required three sessions over several hours by LWVA volunteers. After sending a six-page report to ACT, the Arlington League recommended consulting with us much earlier in the process to promote greater clarity for the voters and simplicity in the ballot.

Gratitude to Pat Lieberon, Susan Born, and Carolyn Parsons for joining me in hand counting all the ballots.

Carolyn Parsons and Angela Olszewski: Co-Presidents
CarolynMParsons@msn.com, amolszewski@gmail.com
Ann FitzGerald: Membership AnnFitz@rcn.com

Kim Haase: Bulletin Editor c.haase@comcast.net
Margaret Reiners: Bulletin Mailing mlreiners@gmail.com

Co-President's Message

We will soon usher in the new year with the annual Martin Luther King birthday observance celebration. Past guest speakers have certainly been inspiring; the music has been rousing – some of the voices have echoed off of the Town Hall walls; the opportunity to meet old friends and to greet new faces has brought warmth to the cold season. The League is a sponsor of this event. I urge you to attend.

I attended, for the first time, a Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting to learn about the proposal for building on the Mugar site in East Arlington. The League has been opposed to previous versions of developing the site because of incursions on the wetlands throughout a majority of the area. I learned that, because the development will be done according to Chapter 40B regulations (affordable housing), the ZBA may not consider the impact on schools nor may the ZBA consider the degree of economic gain by the developer when deciding to grant or deny zoning variances. I am reporting this to the best of my understanding. The ZBA seemed to be quite interested in the results of hydrology and transportation studies to be performed by both the developer and the town in the next few months. No plans were submitted, but over 200 housing units were mentioned. I said not a word, but a number of residents voiced their concern about the negative impact on the neighborhood.

Happy New Year!


Carolyn Parsons

Directions to Phyllis Maddox's home, 55 Hillside Ave.:

55 Hillside Ave. is between Appleton St. and Florence Ave.

Follow Mass. Ave. to Park Ave. in Arlington Heights. Take Park toward Rt. 2 for 2 blocks to Appleton. Turn right on Appleton for one block to Hillside, then turn left on Hillside. 55 is the 3rd house on the right with a front porch and a large yew bush in the front yard.

If you are coming down Park Avenue from the south, take a left on Florence, then the first right on Hillside. 55 is about 8 houses down on your left.



LWVA LEADERSHIP 2019–2020	
Carolyn Parsons, Co-President	781-646-9309
Angela Olszewski, Co-President	781-648-8649
Meredith Zona, Organization VP	781-648-2753
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Susan Born, Candidates Night	617-448-4179
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Mel Goldsipe, Voters Service Cmte	781-325-2778

The BULLETIN is published monthly except during the summer and December by the League of Women Voters of Arlington, PO Box 461, Arlington, MA 02476.



JOIN US!

**The 32nd Annual
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Birthday Observance**

Monday, January 20, 2020

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- > Please bring non-perishable goods for the Arlington Food Pantry.
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Library Director Nicolay Recounts Changes Past and Future

By Carolyn Parsons

My impression after hearing the presentation from Andrea Nicolay, Arlington's Director of Libraries, at the League's annual Holiday Party, is that the library of my youth and, indeed, the library of my son's youth is not the library of today. In addition to books, audiobooks, music CDs, Video DVDs, and programs for all age groups, there is a Library of Things from which a patron may borrow tools such as a digital thermometer camera for checking for where there are heat leaks in your home. (See <https://www.robbinslibrary.org/borrowing-items/library-of-things> for information.) Did you know that approximately 28,000 library cards have been issued to Arlington residents?

During this past summer the Robbins Library served as a cool safe haven on a Sunday, when the library is usually closed. Between 400 and 500 residents took advantage of the air conditioning and could watch a movie if they wanted.

Both the Robbins and Fox Libraries are in need of updating. The demand for free meeting space in both libraries is high, especially with rooms that can be reconfigured depending on the number of attendees.

For Robbins: Given the high attendance at children's programs, the library needs a dedicated space for story hour and sing-a-longs. Similarly, a contained, dedicated teen space with improved sight lines and some sound proofing is needed to accommodate the 40% uptick in teenage use. There is no bathroom on the upper floor.

For Fox: Discussions have included the possibility of replacing the building in its entirety. The current building has accessibility limitations at the entrance – a small lip. There is no elevator in the building to access the basement; the mechanical systems need to be replaced. There is talk about some sort of mixed use for a new building – maybe affordable housing on an upper level.

Ms. Nicolay was a delightful speaker at the December 12 gathering. Many thanks to Joan and Jim Robbio for their hospitality, and to all League members and friends who contributed to the delicious potluck.



Carolyn Parsons, Library Director Andrea Nicolay, Kathy Fennelly, and Barbara Thornton at the Holiday Party.

Photo by Anne Linn

See page 7 for more information, and page 8 for another photo.



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League of Women Voters
for its contribution to
our community**

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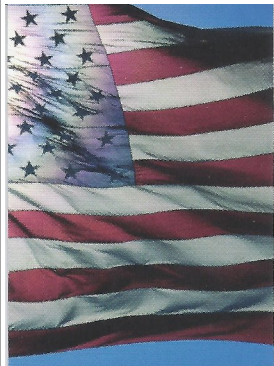
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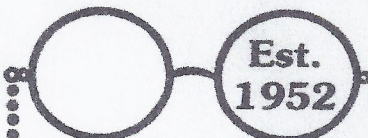


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Links to Library Information

By Andrea Nicolay

First of all, thanks again for inviting me to speak this year at the holiday dinner. I was honored to sit in the wingback chair in Joan and Jim's beautiful living room and talk about the library for a while. It's an exciting time for the League and the library--both institutions devoted to promoting civil discourse and an informed citizenry. These are noble and uplifting concepts in this day and age.

And now, the links...

Call to Action: eBooks for all

This is the Macmillan petition I mentioned.

<https://ebooksforall.org/>

Sign up for Library e-Newsletters

The General Library and PLUGGED iN newsletters are monthly; Children's is weekly; Teen is intermittent.

[Click here to sign up.](#)

Book recommendations

Palaces for the People by Eric Klinenberg

https://find.minlib.net/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3770432

The Library Book by Susan Orlean

https://find.minlib.net/iii/encore/record/C_Rb3767324

Podcast recommendations

The Librarian Is In - New York Public Library podcast about books

<https://www.nypl.org/voices/blogs/blog-channels/librarian-is-in>

What Would Alice Paul Do - about recruiting for the LWV - very inspiring!

<https://www.alicepaulpodcast.com/podcast>

Happy holidays to the League!

[Ed.: See the last page of the Bulletin for information on the Library's January 28 program on the 2020 Census.]

League to Commemorate Our Founding

LWVUS has designated **Feb. 14, 2020**, the actual 100th anniversary of the League's founding, as a Day of Action.

LWVMA is working on a Day of Action program focused on events at the State House and a social media campaign for all members to participate in. Look for details in the February Bulletin.



Joan Robbio, Holiday Party host, at the potluck table.

Photo by Anne Linn

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Sheriff Koutoujian Speaks at Newton League Event

By Kim Haase

Nine LWVA members formed a good-sized contingent at Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian's talk in Newton in mid-November. Marcia Johnson of the Newton League introduced the speaker.

Sheriff Koutoujian described the many programs available at the Billerica House of Correction (HoC) to men awaiting trial and those serving misdemeanor sentences. He acknowledged Colleen Kirby and others' work helping inmates register and vote and in educating Town Clerks about their rights. Other programs include:

- "Changing Lives through Literature," a class where inmates, judges, and a corrections officer read and discuss short stories in an equal exchange of ideas as a route to empowerment and respect for all
- Mental health and substance abuse programs, including medically assisted treatment for those with addictions to opioids and methamphetamines, which vastly reduces the recidivism rate for this population
- A pilot program on data-driven justice that should help identify and divert "superutilizers" who keep cycling through the criminal justice system without getting the support they need
- A Housing Unit for Military Veterans (HUMV), which provides therapy, community, and connection to post-release services
- A Young Adult Offenders Unit for those between 18 and 25, who aren't yet mature and have the highest rates of incarceration, to keep them in contact with family and engaged with others
- Case workers at the Framingham facility for women, who have different issues from men (more mental health issues, children, longer sentences)

Outside of the corrections facility, the Sheriff drew attention to police departments like Arlington's that employ social workers to help them interact with troubled citizens. Also, "navigators" help released people in treatment keep their appointments and engage with the services they need.

The goal of all these programs is not just to reduce crime but to save lives.

Questions from attendees brought up more programs and issues, including the following:

- A restoration center to divert those with mental health crises from hospitals and jails, currently at the procurement stage
- The need to simplify probation requirements so that it isn't so easy to violate them and be thrown back into jail
- The proposed restoration of voting rights to felons as well as those in the HoC
- A family support unit, just getting started

(Continued on next page)



Sheriff Koutoujian (Cont.)

- The high cost of inmate telephone call and commissary fees, which go to support some of the programs but further impoverish inmates and families
- Gun buyback programs, such as those in Arlington, which help reduce suicides and accidents more than crime

Arlington's Acting Chief of Police Juliann Flaherty attended the event, and many Arlington League members thanked her for coming.

The event, sponsored by the Newton League and co-sponsored by Arlington, took place at the Angier Elementary School in Waban.

Sheriff Koutoujian describes Middlesex County corrections programs.

Photo by Colleen Kirby



We welcome new members at all times.
Thank you for your support.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARLINGTON
Membership Application/Renewal Form

Fiscal Year runs from April 1 to March 31

Name _____ Precinct _____ Date _____
Address _____ Zip _____ Occupation _____
Telephone _____ Email _____

_____ Please indicate if you do NOT want your contact information sent to Arlington League members

_____ Basic Membership Dues..... \$60
_____ 2nd member in household \$23
_____ Student (full-time) \$20
_____ Contribution to help the LWV in Arlington, add \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

If \$60 is a hardship, please pay what you can and let us know that this is your dues payment.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: League of Women Voters of Arlington
MAIL TO: Ann FitzGerald, 162 Summer St., Unit 1, Arlington, MA 02474

Please check areas of interest and activity even if you can't be actively involved THIS year.

SPECIAL LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

- Join the Board. Position: _____
Action: phone calls _____ letters _____
Bulletin: mailing _____ soliciting ads _____
Membership _____
Nominating Committee _____
Publicity Writer _____
Voter Service: Rides to the polls _____
Candidates Night _____
Voters' Guide _____
Attend State League's Phonathon _____
Be a discussion leader at local meetings _____
Fundraising activities _____
Offer meeting refreshments _____
Post fliers and deliver brochures _____
Host a meeting in my home _____
Monitor elections for nonprofit organizations _____

FOLLOW ISSUES, KEEP LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY INFORMED

- Congress/Presidency/Election Process _____
Discrimination/Equal Employment/Civil Rights _____
Education/Child Care _____
Environment/Recycling _____
Health Care _____
Justice/Courts/Prisons _____
Land Use _____
Taxation/Budgets/Deficits _____
Transportation/Urban Policy _____
Voting Rights _____
Warrant Articles Review _____
Welfare Policies/Basic Human Needs _____
Women's Issues _____
Zoning/Community Development/Land Use _____

OBSERVE AT

TOWN BOARD MEETINGS*

- Selectmen (Mondays) _____
Redevelopment Board (Mondays) _____
School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays) _____
Conservation Commission (1st & 3rd Thurs.) _____
Housing Authority _____

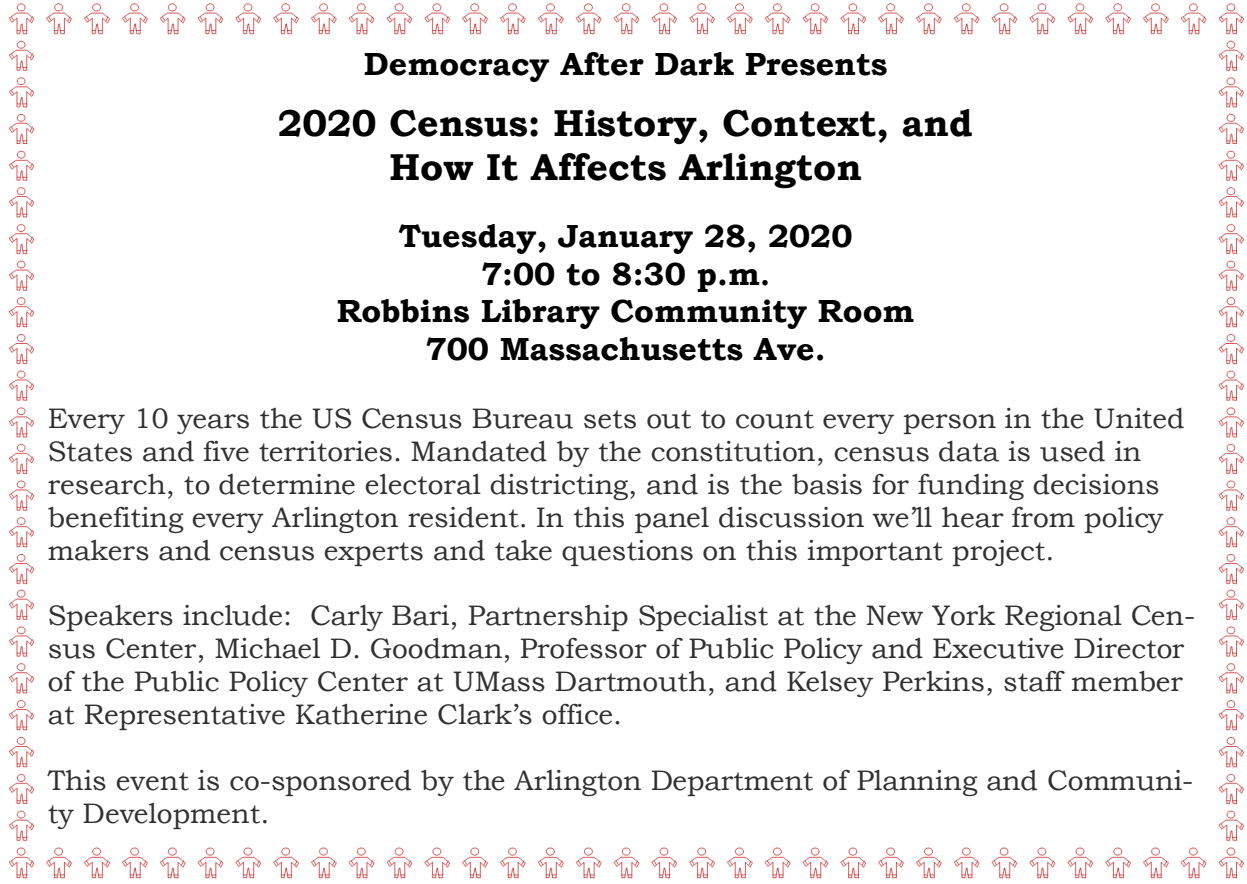
SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON

- Computer database _____ Fundraising _____
Graphic design _____ Writing articles _____
Desktop publishing _____ Other _____
Web site maintenance _____
Membership development _____
Moderating meetings _____

BEST TIME TO CALL YOU:

(for phone tree reminders) Call before _____ o'clock

*Some of these can be seen on cable TV



Democracy After Dark Presents

**2020 Census: History, Context, and
How It Affects Arlington**

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

**Robbins Library Community Room
700 Massachusetts Ave.**

Every 10 years the US Census Bureau sets out to count every person in the United States and five territories. Mandated by the constitution, census data is used in research, to determine electoral districting, and is the basis for funding decisions benefiting every Arlington resident. In this panel discussion we'll hear from policy makers and census experts and take questions on this important project.

Speakers include: Carly Bari, Partnership Specialist at the New York Regional Census Center, Michael D. Goodman, Professor of Public Policy and Executive Director of the Public Policy Center at UMass Dartmouth, and Kelsey Perkins, staff member at Representative Katherine Clark's office.

This event is co-sponsored by the Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development.

January 2020

**League of Women Voters of Arlington
Post Office Box 461
Arlington, MA 02476**

