



BULLETIN
lwva.com

January 2023

Calendar

January 3	Tuesday 7 p.m.	LWVA Board Meeting via Zoom teleconference. The meeting URL will be sent to attendees; email one of the Co-Presidents if you would like to attend.
January 16	Monday 6:30 p.m.	35th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.. Birthday Observance, Town Hall, in person for the first time since 2020! The LWVA is a co-sponsor. Details on page 3.

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

Dear League Members,

As I write this message it is a rather nasty, rainy day. I am trying to make things merry and bright with tags, wrapping, tissue and bags that do not seem coordinated with each other.

A wonderful, welcoming setting for the League's holiday gathering was provided by our hosts, Joan and James Robbio. Our speaker, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Elizabeth Homan, was an absolute delight. Running a school department is a challenge unto itself; running a school department amid a construction zone presents another layer of challenges. I keep thinking about the noise and the dust. (See page 5 to read about her presentation.)

For many years the League has been a co-sponsor of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Observance celebration. I am looking forward to the return of an in-person event. Bring your family and friends to meet other members of the community and lift your voice in song. It seems to me that this year it is especially important that Arlington be seen as a welcoming community. (I have written a version of these words several times. Maybe next year it will be different.)

Wishing you a bright and healthy new year,

Carolyn Parsons

LWVA LEADERSHIP 2022–2023

Carolyn Parsons, Co-President	781-646-9309
Angela Olszewski, Co-President	781-648-8649
Meredith Zona, Organization VP	781-648-2753
Patricia Muldoon, Action VP	339-223-3300
Joan Martin, Treasurer	617-966-4521
Anne Linn, Secretary	781-643-0356
Ann FitzGerald, Membership Director	781-646-9711
Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Voter Service	781-648-9026
Jo Anne Preston, Voter Service	781-643-5431
Kim Haase, Bulletin Editor/Ads	781-643-3429
Margaret Reiners, Bulletin Mailing	781-646-9611
Janice Bakey, Email Coordinator	781-643-4345
Phyllis Maddox, Webmistress	774-266-3422
Samantha Dutra, Member at Large	857-266-9570

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.

35th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration

JANUARY 16, 2023

Arlington Town Hall 6:30pm

730 Massachusetts Avenue



Keynote Speaker

Tanisha Sullivan

NAACP Boston President

**Special performances by
Arlington High School Music Department**

Help us continue Dr. King's Legacy

Scan to Donate

Digitally



Mail Donations to:

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE COMMITTEE OF ARLINGTON,
MASSACHUSETTS
P.O. Box 320, Arlington, MA 02476
Questions? Call 781-819-4603



The program will also be available for viewing on the local channels and live streamed. Watch LIVE at acmi.tv/publive at 6:30PM on January 16th or on the Public Channels: RCN 629, Verizon 31, Comcast 8. Also available on the Government Channels: RCN 614, Verizon 26, Comcast 22. The event will also be streamed on the Arlington Human Rights Commission Facebook page.


COOKIE TIME BAKERY LLC

781-646-0121

Tuesday - Saturday
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

1375 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476

  cookieertimebakery.com





**Arlington Heights
Nursery School**

ESTABLISHED 1965

*A creative and joyful learning environment
for infants, toddlers and preschoolers*

Margaret Potter, Director

10 Acton Street, Arlington, MA 02476
(t) 781-646-8499 www.ahnschool.org



arlington children's center

17 irving street * arlington, ma * 02476

781 646 9307 www.arlingtonchildrenscenter.org

To advertise in our Bulletin,
email or call Kim Haase:
c.haase@comcast.net,
781-643-3429

MEMBER AMERICAN GEM SOCIETY 

Swanson
Jewelers Inc.

DAVID R. SWANSON
CERTIFIED GEMOLOGIST
APPRAISER
DAVID@SWANSONJEWELERS.COM

717 MASSACHUSETTS AVE.
ARLINGTON, MASS. 02476
PHONE (781) 643-4209

ACE Hardware

R. W. Shattuck & Co. Inc.
24 Mill St. Arlington, MA 02476
781-643-0114

Shattuck Heights Hardware
1298 Mass Ave. Arlington, MA 02476
781-643-1900

Shattuck Hardware
327 Woburn St. Lexington, MA 02420
781-863-0100

Bradford's Ace Hardware
231 Main St. Hyannis, MA 02601
508-775-0620

John Wheatley III
President
508-958-4074
johnwheatley@wris.com

PRESCRIPTIONS FILLED EYGLASSES REPAIRED


**Same Day Service Available
On Certain Prescriptions**

Office Hours:
Mon -Tues, Thurs Fri - 9-6
Closed Wed • Sat 9-3:30 • Lunch 12:30-1:30



Ronald A. Riesz
Dispensing Optician

Est. 1952

www.rieszoptical.com
452 Massachusetts Ave. Arlington Center 

 **Safilo** 

Ask us about Optikam
(781) 643-7325

10% off for LWVA members and their families

Schools Superintendent Provides Insights at Holiday Party

By Kim Haase

League members, family, and friends joined together December 5 at our annual Holiday Party, hosted by Joan and James Robbio. This was our first in-person gathering since early 2020. After a potluck dinner that was fully up to our standards of yore, our guest speaker was Dr. Elizabeth Homan, Superintendent of Schools. We had hoped to hear her speak at our Annual Meeting, which had to be cancelled in June because of Covid.

Dr. Homan grew up in rural central Illinois. Her grandfather was a biology professor (and jazz pianist) and her mother was a teacher, but her first interest was in architecture. After some good experiences teaching figure skating and ESL, she moved into education, thinking of administration with a view to helping teachers experiment.

Connections, relationships, and trust are Dr. Homan's main concerns as superintendent. Learning involves growth and taking risks, so an atmosphere of trust is essential.

Dr. Homan welcomed many questions about the schools. She feels lucky, with her early interest in architecture, to have arrived in Arlington to help carry out the plans for the new high school. She is happy about the building's structure; instead of having some six-floor buildings, the multi-level school will in most places have no more than three levels. The large central area going from the street down to the athletic fields will give the feel of an open, welcoming campus that students will have no need to leave.

Sustainability is a major focus, along with energy efficiency. The school will be almost all electric (some gas is needed in the STEAM building), with solar panels on the way. Windows have airlocks, and the buildings can be kept at a constant temperature of 71-72 degrees. Geothermal pumps had to be abandoned because of ground contamination. The lifetime of the building should be about 70 years.

League members raised the issue of low voter turnout in local elections. In response, Dr. Homan noted that civic involvement is an important value for the schools. Dr. Homan's seven bosses (the School Committee) provide a great model of engagement. The state has revised the 8th grade curriculum to focus on civics, which will be part of the 8th grade MCAS. Arlington is working on a pilot now, having students adopt civic action projects focusing on local issues, doing surveys, research, and action. Extracurricular clubs already focus on sustainability, composting, and pollinators. Also, third graders do a mock Town Meeting where they present and vote on articles. League members noted that in the past, they've also toured the Jason Russell House to learn about Arlington's history.

Members noted that the League used to take a group of high-school students to the LWVMA's Day on the Hill, where they had lunch and tours from our legislators and learned to lobby on issues. The League also used to do voter registration and pre-registration in the cafeteria, although students can do this online now.

(Continued on page 7)



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

**Arlington Community Media, Inc.
Your Connection to Arlington Television**

85 Park Ave, Arlington, MA
781-777-1115
<http://acmi.tv>



**LEONE & LEONE
ATTORNEYS AT LAW**

Leone & Leone is a General Practice law firm. We stand upon the principle of providing high quality legal representation in a cost-effective manner.

If you are buying or selling a home or a business, would like to create or update your Will or Estate Plan, or require assistance in most legal matters, please give us a call.

John D. Leone - Suzanne M. Leone

637 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476
781-648-2345

john@leonelaw.com, www.leonelaw.com

Initial consultation is free for LWVA members

Holiday Party (Continued)

The schools are phasing in shared leadership structures. The administration team does instructional rounds, visiting classrooms and debriefing. This year they are working on instructional leadership teams, focusing on teaching practices and building teachers' skills and discussing what they do.

DBEI (Diversity, Belonging, Equity, and Inclusion) is another major focus and a long-term process. Currently they are working on making sure all staff feel they belong. Currently, 4 of 7 administrators are white, but 85% of the teaching staff are white. Licensing requirements are a barrier, and we need alternate paths to licenses.

Recruiting new teachers is a worry now; fewer students are interested in teaching, partly because of the pressures currently put on teachers and administrators, partly because teaching is not well paid. The high school is including courses on education and teaching in the curriculum as well as encouraging students to work with the Menotomy Preschool on campus. Arlington pays less than surrounding towns. Our resources are constrained; to pay more, we'd have to take from other areas. Arlington is a desirable place to teach, both well located and innovative. We can attract new teachers, but they have to live farther out for affordability, and then they move out there when they have families.



Co-host Joan Robbio, Superintendent Elizabeth Homan, and Organization VP Meredith Zona after Dr. Homan's talk.

Photo by Phyllis Maddox

League of Women Voters Files Amicus Brief in Moore v. Harper

From the State League

In late October, the League of Women Voters of the United States and League chapters from all 50 states and the District of Columbia filed an amicus brief in the Moore v. Harper case before the Supreme Court. The case concerns the so-called “independent state legislature theory” (ISLT), which, if adopted, would have far-reaching implications for the future of American democracy. The League is represented by Fair Elections Center and O’Melveny & Myers LLP.

“Giving states unchecked power to set rules for federal elections is an assault on the American voter,” said Virginia Kase Solomón, CEO of the League of Women Voters of the US. “Historically, state legislatures have enacted the most harmful and suppressive anti-voter laws, and pro-voter groups like the League have relied on the ability to fight them in state courts. The Independent State Legislature Theory is a dangerous, fringe ideology that leaves voters effectively defenseless from harmful election laws.”

The League of Women Voters has serious concerns about this case because a ruling adopting ISLT would give state legislatures nearly unrestricted authority to set the rules for federal elections, prioritizing the ambitions of politicians over the American voter. Furthermore, if the Supreme Court condones this theory, it will undermine the role of state courts to protect voters when politicians create unconstitutional barriers to voting, draw unlawful voting maps, and invalidate direct democracy efforts like ballot initiatives.

“In creating the US Constitution, the framers were intentional about establishing a checks and balances system to disrupt any one branch of government from becoming too powerful,” said Celina Stewart, chief counsel and senior director of advocacy and litigation at the League of Women Voters of the US. “Because state courts have been vested in the salient role of deciding disputes that govern our daily lives, any unraveling of this longstanding balancing would be a dangerous and historic blow to democracy as we know it. We implore the Court to rule in favor of voters and reject the Independent State Legislature Theory.”

As this case has massive implications for every state, the League of Women Voters amicus brief expresses the concerns of Leagues representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The League’s brief focuses on the practical, negative impacts that ISLT will have across the country. Specifically, the brief explores how implementing such a theory would create different election rules for state, local, and federal elections that would cause confusion for administrators and voters alike and would have a deleterious effect in maintaining free and fair elections.

“The theory advanced in Moore calls for a legal revolution that would chop up and alternate rules by type of election, ushering in chaos and confusion for poll workers and voters,” said Jon Sherman, litigation director and senior counsel for Fair Elections Center. “In this dangerous moment for our democracy, the Supreme Court must be a steady hand.”

“Our team is privileged to have had the opportunity to collaborate with the League of Women Voters and the Fair Elections Center in showing how ISLT would shatter election norms and processes that are central to the functioning of our democracy,” said Meaghan VerGow, partner at O’Melveny & Myers LLP.

Elizabeth Foster-Nolan, president, and Patricia Comfort, executive director, LWV of Massachusetts, commented, “The adoption of the Independent State Legislature Theory (“ISLT”) by the US Supreme Court would allow politicians nearly unrestricted authority to thwart the will of Massachusetts voters in federal elections. Checks and balances, the underpinning of our democracy, must be preserved. Adoption of the ISLT will erode well-established and fair checks and balances already in place in Massachusetts.”



We welcome new members at any time. Thank you!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARLINGTON Membership Application/Renewal Form

Fiscal Year runs from April 1 to March 31

Name, Address, Telephone, Zip, Precinct, Occupation, Date, 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

- Action: phone calls letters, Bulletin: mailing soliciting ads, Membership, Nominating Committee, Publicity, Voter Service: Rides to the polls, Candidates Night, Voters' Guide, Host a meeting in my home

FOLLOW ISSUES, KEEP LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY INFORMED

- Congress/Presidency/Election Process, Discrimination/Equal Employment/Civil Rights, Education, Environment/Climate Change, Health Care, Justice/Courts/Prisons, Housing/Zoning/Community Development, Taxation/Budgets/Deficits, Transportation/Urban Policy, Voting Rights, Basic Human Needs, Women's Issues/Gender Issues, Housing/Zoning/Community Development, Other

OBSERVE AT TOWN BOARD MEETINGS*

- Select Board (Mondays), Redevelopment Board (Mondays), School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays), Conservation Commission, Housing Authority

SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON

- Writing articles, Computer spreadsheet, Desktop publishing, Website management, Moderating meetings, Membership development

*Some of these can be seen on cable TV

Please add my name, street address, phone number, and email address to the LWVA mailing list: Yes No

(Note: This information will not be sent to anyone outside the LWVA)

January 2023

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

