

# *BULLETIN*

League of Women Voters  
Arlington, Massachusetts

*www.lwva.com*

## March 2010

### Calendar

3/5	Friday noon to 1 pm	March First Friday Lunch with Stephen Gilligan, Arlington Treasurer, at Carma Forgie's home, 11 Stony Brook Road. All are welcome. See page 5 for details.
3/7	Sunday 11:30 am to 2 pm	Legislators' Brunch at Kathy Fennelly's home, 97 Gray St. See page 3 for details.
3/16	Tuesday 7 pm	LWVA Board Meeting at Ann FitzGerald's home, 162 Summer St., Unit 1. All members welcome. Directions on page 2.
3/25	Thursday 7:30 pm	Candidates' Night for the Town Election. Town Meeting candidates available from 7:30 to 8 pm; the candidates' forum starts at 8. Volunteers are needed for set-up and clean-up. Four timers are needed. Please call Carolyn Parsons at 781-646-9309 to offer your help. See last page for details.
	Thursday 4/1	LWVA Fiscal Year begins — please use the form on page 11 to send your annual dues to our Treasurer.
	Wednesday 4/28	LWVMA Annual Day on the Hill. Details in next month's Bulletin.

### Town Election Calendar

3/8	Monday 5 pm	Deadline for filing certified nomination papers with Town Clerk.
3/22	Monday 8 pm	Voter registration deadline for Town Election.
4/10	Saturday 8 am to 8 pm	Town Election.
4/26	Monday 8 pm	Town Meeting begins.

**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,

Happy almost spring! I am anxious to get out into my yard and gather up all the debris.


The projected fiscal position of the Town is rather dismaying. The League is providing a number of opportunities for your opinion to be heard and for your questions to be asked and maybe answered.

- **First Friday Lunch:** Stephen Gilligan, Arlington Treasurer, will be the speaker on March 5 at the home of Carma Forgie. The LWVA has a position that the Town Treasurer should be appointed by the Town Manager with the approval of the Board of Selectmen. What is Mr. Gilligan's position? Suggestions have been made to supplement this year's budget with a withdrawal from the Reserve Fund. What is Mr. Gilligan's opinion and how would this affect the Town's bond rating?
- **Legislators' Brunch:** All of our legislators will be present to share food and participate in a lively discussion. What are their priorities? What is happening with local aid? Is there proposed legislation affecting health insurance for municipal employees?
- **Candidates' Night:** Co-sponsored by the LWVA and Vision 2020, Candidates' Night provides the community with an opportunity to learn about the candidates' qualifications, their character, and their strengths and weaknesses. Please come!
- **Voters' Guide:** Look for the Voters' Guide to be published in the Arlington Advocate. Hopefully, you will find the questions and answers provocative.

Carolyn Parsons  
Co-president

Directions to Ann FitzGerald's home, 162 Summer St., Unit 1:

162 Summer Street is on the south side of Summer Street, a few houses to the east of the intersection with Oak Hill Drive. Summer Street is very busy, so you should park on the south side of the street. If you are coming from the center, you can turn into Oak Hill Drive, turn around, and park on the south side.



### LWVA LEADERSHIP 2009–2010

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	781-648-1019
Patricia Lieberson, Local Action VP	781-646-1987
Kathleen Colwell, Treasurer	781-646-4522
Anne Linn, Secretary	781-643-0356
Ann FitzGerald, Membership Director	781-646-9711
Deborah Sirotkin Butler, Publicity	781-646-8204
Carma Forgie, Speaker Series	781-643-7622
Katharine Fennelly, Voters' Guide	781-648-1794
Kim Haase, Bulletin Editor	781-643-3429
Margaret Reiners, Bulletin Mailing	781-646-9611
Janice Bakey, Email Coordinator	781-643-4345
Phyllis Maddox, Webmistress	781-646-4362

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.



## **LEGISLATORS' BRUNCH**

### **SUNDAY, MARCH 7, 2010**

Come Meet and Talk with State Senator Ken Donnelly  
and State Representatives Will Brownsberger, Sean Garballey, and  
Jay Kaufman

Find out the Latest on Jobs, Budgets, Education, Health Care  
And the Changing Political Landscape in Massachusetts  
- All While Enjoying Sumptuous Food!

When & Where –

**Sunday, March 7, 2010, 11:30 AM - 2:00 PM**  
**Kathy & Paul Fennelly's House - 97 Gray St., Arlington**

Please contact Meredith Zona, [mzona@fstinc.com](mailto:mzona@fstinc.com)  
or tel. 781-648-2753,  
if you can come and bring your favorite brunch food.

Directions: 97 Gray St. is at the intersection of Gray St. and Churchill Ave.,  
which is the 4<sup>th</sup> right after you turn onto Gray St. from Pleasant St. (Route  
60). If you're traveling on Gray St. from Arlington Heights, Churchill Ave. is  
the 4<sup>th</sup> left after the lights at Highland Ave. The house is a large gray home on  
the right side if you're traveling up from Pleasant Street. There is ample street  
parking.



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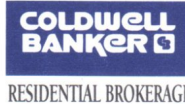


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*Initial Free Consultation for League Members*

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## Town Treasurer to Speak at March First Friday Lunch



*By Carma Forgie*

The First Friday Lunch in March (on the 5<sup>th</sup>) will feature the Town Treasurer, Stephen Gilligan.

As usual, the Lunch will start at about twelve o'clock with the presentation by Mr. Gilligan, with questions to follow. The League will provide drinks. Please bring your own brown-bag lunch. All are invited.

We have had requests for a field trip to the incinerator and the recycling depot in the spring. Ruth Yannetti of the Public Works Department is organizing such a trip. There are also some high school students and some from the Recycling Committee who want to go. Unless it would be a very large group, it will be one trip for all interested. Ms. Yannetti said it most likely would be in the middle of the week, but didn't know if it would be in the morning or afternoon. If you are interested, please let me know by email at [carma9forgie@ix.netcom.com](mailto:carma9forgie@ix.netcom.com).

### **LWVMA Votes to Oppose the Initiative Petition to Repeal 40B**

Opponents of our state's affordable housing zoning law (Chapter 40B) have gathered sufficient signatures to place its repeal on the November 2010 ballot. During this process many local Leagues have been contacted by this group to support their initiative.

40B (the Comprehensive Permit Law) was designed to address local zoning and land use restrictions which limited the availability of affording housing. The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA) supported the passage of this in 1969 and has continued to support its implementation.

The LWVMA has been asked to support efforts to defeat the repeal initiative, and the State Board, which is responsible for taking positions on state issues, voted to join the Community Advisory Committee of the Campaign Against the Repeal of 40B.

The decision is based on, among other considerations, our position on Affordable Housing, which is based on the LWVUS position on Basic Human Needs. In addition, from 2003-2007, the Affordable Housing Study Committee did a comprehensive review of the subject, including a review of 40B, which led to a modification of the state position. Documents regarding this process are available through the State League office and on the website at <http://www.lwvma.org/affordablehousingresources.shtml>.

The Program and Action Committee plans to have an information packet available for local Leagues by early September.



## League of Women Voters Celebrates Milestone Birthday

*By the LWVUS*

The League of Women Voters celebrated its 90th birthday on Sunday, February 14th. Known widely for its voter education efforts, this non-partisan, government watchdog group has been an American institution since 1920.

"More than 850 state and local Leagues across the country will celebrate this milestone birthday throughout 2010," said Mary G. Wilson, national president of the League of Women Voters. "But most importantly, we'll be doing what we always do: discussing the important issues, challenging the status quo and demanding accountability."

In 1920, after a 72-year struggle, and when passage of the 19th amendment appeared to be imminent, members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association met to form the League of Women Voters. Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed the creation of a League to "finish the fight" and to work to end all discrimination against women. While initially concerned with the status and rights of women, the League of Women Voters gradually expanded its interests to include issues affecting the whole community. Today, the League works to effect change on a variety of issues including health care, climate change, election and campaign finance reforms, land use, and education.



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## February First Friday Lunch Discussion with Fire Chief Robert Jefferson

*by Pat Lieberson*

At the First Friday Lunch on February 5, Chief Robert Jefferson was asked what the impact would be if one fire engine company was removed from service for part of the year or certain hours of the day. This has been suggested as one way to save money in response to Arlington's projected budget deficit. He said it would present a safety hazard for Arlington residents. One engine out of service would mean longer response times for some parts of town. The department is already at the lowest level of personnel needed to maintain minimum manning for a town this size. We have gone from 107 firefighters in 1998 to 76 today. There is no one time of year or one time of day when fires are less likely to occur.

Mutual aid from surrounding towns is not as effective as previously because they all have less personnel and equipment due to budget problems. Last summer a fire in a six-unit apartment building in East Arlington was worse than it should have been because neither Cambridge nor Somerville had any equipment available at the time. There has not been much stimulus money available for fire service because it can only pay for specific items that are not what is needed. For example, it will buy ham radios but not the portable computers with printers they need. So their on-scene reports have to be written by hand.

Removing the rescue unit from service part of the time would be the least likely to compromise safety because of private companies available for coverage. But this service actually makes money for the town. Bids have gone out to hire a billing contractor for the rescue service, which could bring in more reimbursement. Regionalization was also discussed as a way to save money. Chief Jefferson said this could work for some administrative functions, such as purchasing. But sharing equipment doesn't work because it would often not be close enough to where it was needed when it was needed.

Chief Jefferson also serves as Director of Emergency Management for Arlington and on the Local Emergency Planning Committee. He oversees training exercises for all town personnel in responding to emergency health and safety emergencies. This planning and training was put to good use recently in running the H1N1 flu vaccination clinics. While it is necessary to plan for terror threats, Arlington is more likely to have to deal with emergencies caused by blizzards, floods, hazardous material spills or health epidemics. Supplies and equipment for use in such emergencies are positioned in various town buildings.

In response to a question about fire hydrant inspection, Chief Jefferson said they have always been inspected regularly. But they were not always opened to allow "flowing" because residents objected to the brown water that resulted. After he became chief he has them all opened for "flowing" and they found over forty were not working. So he has continued the inspections and "flowing" on a regular basis because it is better to have brown water complaints than to not have water available when needed to fight a fire.

Three capital projects are scheduled for the fire service. The \$3.7 million reconstruction of the Highland Station will go out for bid in the next few months. A \$1.3 million repair of the Central Station exterior is in the planning stage. Repair and reconstruction of the Central Station interior space is not scheduled until 2015.

## LWVUS President Speaks Out on Campaign Finance

*Mary G. Wilson, President of the League of Women Voters of the United States, sent the following letter to members of the U. S. Senate on February 18, 2010.*

With the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, it is critically important for Congress to update campaign finance laws, especially disclosure requirements governing corporate and union spending. With the 2010 elections fast approaching, delay is simply not a viable option.

The Court's decision in *Citizens United* allows corporations to make unlimited independent expenditures in candidate elections, thus changing the foundation on which decades of congressional enactments on campaign finance are built. Such fundamental change requires a considered response from Congress. We support a variety of approaches, but we do not expect legislation adopted this year to address every possible issue. However, some steps clearly are vital to govern the conduct of the 2010 elections.

After *Citizens United*, we urgently need enhanced disclosure. This is the most basic step toward protecting the role of the voter in making decisions in elections. It is now possible for corporations to secretly provide funds that another corporation uses to intervene directly in an election. This is simply unacceptable.

The Court pointed in the direction of enhanced disclosure when it said that disclosure is important to "providing the electorate with information." It also supported disclaimer requirements "so that the people will be able to evaluate the arguments to which they are being subjected." We couldn't agree more.

After providing enhanced disclosure, the next most important step for Congress is to do no further harm. A decision as far-reaching as *Citizens United* will provoke proposals that could make our election system and government processes even worse. Such steps as raising contribution limits to candidates and PACs, or allowing corporations and unions to donate huge sums to political parties or even to candidates, could increase corruption or the appearance of corruption and further distort our political processes.

Senator Schumer and Rep. Van Hollen have released a legislative framework providing for heightened disclosure, more complete disclaimers, barring election spending by foreign corporations, barring election ads by government contractors, clarifying coordination rules, and ensuring candidates can afford to respond to heavy corporate or union spending. We believe this is a responsible and balanced approach.

Fair and clean elections, determined by the votes of American citizens, should be at the center of our democracy. Congress must act quickly in addressing the Court's decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*.



**April 1 is the time to pay your annual dues!  
Thank you in advance 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..... \$50  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2nd member in household ..... \$23  
\_\_\_\_\_ Student (full-time) ..... \$20  
\_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to help the LWV in Arlington, add \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*If \$50 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: Kathy Colwell, 60 Claremont Ave., Arlington, MA 02476

\*\*\*\*\*

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 Tuesdays)
- Conservation Commission (1st & 3rd Thurs.)
- Housing Authority

**SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON**

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

**BEST TIME TO CALL YOU:**

(for phone tree reminders) Call before \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock

\*Some of these can be seen on cable TV

*Please Bring Your Friends and Neighbors to*

## **Candidates' Night**

*Co-sponsored by the LWVA and Vision 2020*

**Thursday, March 25**

**Town Hall Auditorium  
730 Massachusetts Avenue**

Meet with Town Meeting candidates and Town-wide candidates  
from 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Forum for candidates for Town-wide offices at 8:00 p.m.

*Volunteers are needed for set-up and clean-up. Four timers are needed. If you  
can help, please contact Carolyn Parsons, 781-646-9309.*

**March 2010**

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

