

BULLETIN

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

May 2012

Calendar

Saturday 5/5 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	LWVMA Council at Lasell College, Newton. The theme will be "Challenges to Democracy: Protecting Voter Rights and the Influence of Money." See last page for details.
Thursday 5/17 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.	Public forum, "Pushing Back on Money Politics," Concord-Carlisle High School Auditorium. Free and open to the public. Details on page 9.
Thursday June 7 6 p.m.	LWVA Annual Meeting at Meredith Zona's home, 1 Andrews Way. See page 3 for details. The Annual Meeting Workbook will be sent to members by May 24.
Friday-Monday June 8-12	LWVUS 50th National Convention in Washington, D.C. See http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/council-and-convention for more information.

The LWVA Board will not meet in May.

Elizabeth Thompson Introduces LWVA to Arlington Voters

To introduce ACMI TV's cable coverage of the April 10 Town Election, LWVA member and past President Elizabeth Thompson gave an introduction to the League and its activities. In case you missed it, it begins about two and a half minutes into the Video On Demand program of election highlights at the following URL:

<http://vod.acmi.tv/2012/04/2012-election-highlights/>

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

Thank you to all of the League members and committee members of Vision 2020 who helped to make Candidates' Night a success. This is one of the most important voter service activities that the League sponsors. We provided valuable information to Arlington's voters as they decided whom to elect in three contested races. It was also a good opportunity for candidates for town meeting to speak with constituents.

We now look forward to our annual meeting on Thursday evening, June 7. Our guest speaker will be Jennifer Ryan, who will speak on behalf of the Arlington Land Trust. This will be a great opportunity to hear about Elizabeth Island and priorities of the Land Trust. As usual, we will also have a potluck dinner. The combination of an interesting speaker and delicious food creates a wonderful opportunity to attend and bring along a guest! This is a perfect event to introduce people to the League!

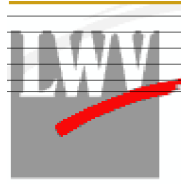
I look forward to seeing you on June 7th.

Angela Olszewski

LWVA LEADERSHIP 2011–2012

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 Lieberman, Local Action VP	781-646-1987
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Anne Linn, Secretary	781-643-0356
Ann FitzGerald, Membership Director	781-646-9711
Betsy Rulon, Publicity	781-648-0169
Katharine Fennelly, Voters' Guide	781-648-1794
Kim Haase, Bulletin Editor	781-643-3429
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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.



League of Women Voters of Arlington Annual Meeting

**Thursday, June 7 at the home of Meredith Zona,
1 Andrews Way
Appetizers at 6:00 pm
Dinner at 6:30 pm with program and a brief business meeting
following**

Our guest speaker is Jennifer Ryan, member of the board of directors of Arlington Land Trust and legislative director for Mass Audubon. At Mass Audubon, Jennifer works to protect the environment through advocacy for initiatives that address climate change, funding mechanisms for land conservation, and endangered species and wetlands protection. Previously, she worked for the Massachusetts Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program as biologist. Jennifer holds a Masters in Entomology and Conservation Biology from the University of Maine, Orono, and Bachelors in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Connecticut, Storrs. She is coauthor of a Field Guide to the Dragonflies and Damselflies of Massachusetts and writes regular articles for Mass Audubon's award-winning *Sanctuary* magazine.

Come to the League's annual meeting to hear Jennifer discuss the successful Elizabeth Island campaign and the ALT's stewardship vision for the island; what's next for ALT; and statewide land conservation and environmental issues for the greater conservation community.

RSVP by June 2 to Meredith Zona at 781-648-2753 or MZona@fstinc.com.

Beverages will be provided. Please let Meredith know if you can bring a dish to share.

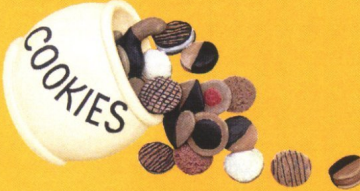
If anyone needs a ride or would like to carpool,
call Carolyn Parsons at 781-646-9309.

Directions to Meredith's House:

From the west end of Arlington, turn onto Overlook Rd., at the Summer St. traffic light across from the skating rink. Keep to the left at the fork and travel about 1/2 mile to Ridge St. Turn right on Ridge St., then first left on Cherokee Rd., first right on Old Colony Rd., and first right on Andrews Way. *Andrews Way is a short street that looks like a driveway. 1 Andrews Way is directly ahead on the left. You may want to park on Old Colony Rd. Come in through the garage if you prefer not to climb the stairs to the front door.*

From Arlington Center, travel on Mystic St. towards Winchester and take slight left on Old Mystic St. (about 3/4 mile north of Summer St.), then 2nd left onto Hutchinson Rd, 2nd left onto Morningside Dr., 1st right onto Windmill Lane, first left onto Old Colony Rd., and 1st left onto Andrews Way; see directions in italics above.

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Initial Free Consultation for League Members

March 2012 Candidates' Night Recap and Thanks

By Carolyn Parsons

The League had another successful Candidates' Night. (I have written the same sentence for the last few years but always fuss ahead of the event about all the details that need attending to.) Town Hall was full! Two hundred chairs had been set up on the floor of Town Hall, and the overflow sat in the balcony. Because of redistricting, more than the usual number of Town Meeting Member candidates attended and were available for questions. Except for the uncontested candidate for the Housing Authority, all the remaining candidates for town-wide offices attended. All candidates were most cooperative as the timing was very tight. I would like to thank the candidates for running for public office, for caring about our town and giving their time to participate in this public forum.

Our guest Moderator, Margaret Coppe, member of the League of Women Voters of Lexington, was instrumental in the success of the evening. Her respectful demeanor with the candidates and audience set a cordial tone for the evening. She kept the forum running smoothly on a tight schedule. This is not an easy task. The clock and the timers must be watched; questions must be asked in a coherent manner; the order in which the candidates speak must be adhered to. At the end the audience gave her a round of applause!

The Moderator presented questions that had been submitted anonymously on cards by audience members. The League thanks League members Joan Martin and Pamela Meister and Arlington Vision 2020 representative Bruce Fitzsimmons, who reviewed all the questions. Many audience members took the time to write questions, representing a range of concerns and issues. The script is a "puzzle", says Sue Fish, script editor. The amount of time for opening and closing remarks, posing the questions, getting on and off the stage must all be taken into account so that the forum ends within a few seconds of 9:30. Sue gathered up the candidates' names, order on the ballot, and numerous suggestions to make a cohesive whole. Two scripts had to be generated as one candidate was not sure about attending. Generating two scripts is a tedious task. Thanks also to League member Elizabeth Thompson who gave the introductory and closing remarks. Elizabeth is very good at making on-the-fly remarks about our political process. Many thanks to the timers, League members Jane Culbert, Sue Fish, Gwentyth Hooper, and Phyllis Maddox, who juggled the stopwatches and time cards for 1½ hours straight in a tightly run program, to ensure equal time for the candidates.

I am very appreciative of the cablecast crew for the amount of work and effort they contributed to broadcast this event. They made it possible for those unable to attend to view the forum and make an informed decision when voting.

Thanks to Jane Howard, LWV of Arlington and Vision 2020, for her many roles in organizing this event. Reserving Town Hall, ensuring that the sign announcing Candidates' Night in front of Town Hall is up, installing privacy skirts around the tables, and hanging the League banner for all to see were all tasks done without a word from me. Jane knows where supplies are kept or whom to ask where a particular item may be. Jane is also a good sounding board when I need advice about an awkward situation.

Many League members made the night run smoothly. Nancy and John Sweeney helped with the set up of Town Hall; Betsy Rulon and Kim Haase helped with the clean up. Peggy Reiners and Angela Olszewski served as greeters and staffed the League table, handing out the Voters Guides, fielding questions, and encouraging audience members to submit questions. Ann FitzGerald answered questions about joining the League. Candidates Night was successful because of the generosity and commitment of many League members. A number of people congratulated me on a well-run, informative event. I am pleased that all is done but the filing. I said the same thing last year!

Rides to the Polls a Success

By Phyllis Maddox

The League provided rides to the polls for the Arlington Town Election on April 10.

Thanks to Anne Fitzgerald, Janice Bakey, Joan Martin, Kathy Fennelly, Carolyn Parsons, Patti Muldoon, Nancy Solomon, and Elizabeth Thompson for volunteering to drive.

It means a great deal to our riders that they have a chance to vote.



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Note: The following resolution, which has been submitted to the 2012 LWFVUS Convention by the Leagues of Concord-Carlisle, Amherst, and Sudbury, reaffirms the LWFVUS commitment to combat undue influence in the financing of elections and urges the League to advocate vigorously for measures to reverse the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling, which grants to corporations, unions, and other legislatively determined entities the individual rights guaranteed to natural persons of this country by the Constitution.

The Leagues submitting the resolution are holding a caucus on campaign finance reform at the Convention, titled "Democracy in the Balance: Money, Speech and Power."

The LWVA Board voted to support this resolution and to contribute \$100 to defray the expenses of the caucus.

Resolution to 2012 LWFVUS Convention

Whereas **the LWFVUS position on Campaign Finance** states: The method of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process;

Whereas the **LWFVUS position on Individual Liberties** states: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes in the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The League is convinced that individual rights now protected by the Constitution should not be weakened or abridged;

Whereas the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* overturned longstanding precedent prohibiting corporations from spending their general treasury funds in our elections;

Whereas the United States Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* has unleashed a torrent of corporate money in our political process unmatched by any campaign expenditure totals in United States history;

Therefore, be it resolved we, the representatives of local and state Leagues assembled at the 2012 LWFVUS Convention, call upon the LWFVUS Board to advocate strongly for all measures — including but not limited to a constitutional amendment — which

- Affirm that free speech rights belong to natural persons, not corporations or other non-person entities;
- Allow Congress and the States to set limits on campaign contributions and expenditures;
- Ensure that elections are determined by the votes of natural persons.

LWVA 2012 Town Meeting Warrant Choices

By Pat Lieberson

Before Town Meeting every year, a committee goes through the warrant and identifies those articles that represent LWVA program interests. This is usually around thirty articles. We then research these articles in terms of the specific intent, possible effects on governance or public policy, and whether we have a consensus that supports our approval or opposition. The committee presents its recommendations to the LWVA Board, which makes the final decisions. This year's committee included Ann FitzGerald, Pat Lieberson, Phyllis Maddox, John Sweeney, and Nancy Sweeney.

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports the approval of the following warrant articles to be considered at the 2012 annual Town Meeting: 6, 7, 10, 12, 20, 22, 29, 30, 31, 51, 52, and 68. We oppose articles 15 and 71. We also support articles 7, 8, 9, and 10 in the Special Town Meeting.

The League **supports** articles 6, 7, 10, 52, and 68, which would enhance the Town's planning process, support our business community, and promote our valuable historic resources. **Article 6** would remove public art from the zoning definition of a sign. This would enable such art to have its own category, with more specific and appropriate definitions and regulations. **Article 7** would permit mixed use of business and housing in the same building in business districts. This could encourage more businesses to stay in Arlington or encourage desirable new businesses to locate here. **Article 10** would permit promotional, informational, and directional signage relative to historical sites, and **Article 52** would appropriate money for permanent informational signs at four of Arlington's most important historic sites. **Article 68** would form a committee to accurately determine the Town status under the Chapter 40B 1.5% land area exemption in order to better implement Arlington's affordable housing policies.

The League **supports** Articles 12, 20, and 22, which could lead to more effective and efficient Town governance. **Article 12** would consolidate the Town and School human resource functions. **Article 20** would impose shorter time limits on speakers at Town Meeting and encourage more people to participate in the discussions, and **Article 22** would establish a committee to study effects of electronic voting at Town Meeting. The League strongly **opposes Article 15**, which would delete the requirement that approved meeting minutes be placed on file at the Robbins Library. This would limit citizens' timely access to these important documents and, thus, limit citizen information and participation in their government.

The League **supports** Articles 29, 30, and 31, which would provide some property tax relief for lower income elderly residents. They would lower the interest rate for tax deferrals, increase the annual income limit, and allow the assessors to grant increased exemptions.

The League **supports** Article 51 and Special Town Meeting Articles 8, 9, and 10, which are concerned with protecting the quality of our natural environment. **Article 51** would contribute to the Water Bodies Fund for maintenance, treatment and oversight. **Articles 8 and 9** would establish a fund for energy conservation measures and energy efficiency improvements in Town and School buildings and other Town assets. **Article 10** would encourage recycling by establishing penalties for not doing so.

The League **supports** Special Town Meeting **Article 7** to appropriate funds for Thompson School construction. The League has been an active supporter of efforts to reconstruct Arlington's seven elementary schools to provide an appropriate environment and resources for the future educational needs of the Town's students.

The League **opposes Article 71**. This article is a petition from an individual to waive the civil service age requirements for employment as an Arlington police officer. Granting such petitions defeats the purpose of the civil service program and is inherently unfair to other applicants for these positions.

PUSHING BACK ON MONEY POLITICS, 2012

A Public Forum

Thursday, May 17th, 7:30-9:30 pm

Concord-Carlisle High School Auditorium

500 Walden Street, Concord

(Doors open at 7:00 pm. No reserved seating.)

A panel of experts will share their views on the role of money in the 2012 election landscape and discuss options for citizen action in response.

Moderated by

Tom Ashbrook

Host of *On Point*, a production of 90.9 WBUR Boston

Panelists include:

Lawrence Lessig, Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership, Harvard Law School, and Director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University (<http://www.lessig.org/info/bio/>)

Jeff Clements, Attorney and author
(<http://corporationsarenotpeople.com/author/jeffclements/>)

Mimi Marziani, Counsel for the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
(http://www.brennancenter.org/people/marziani_mimi/)

Following the panel discussion, questions from the audience will be taken. Free and open to the public. Refreshments following the forum.

For more information: PushingBack@lwvcc.org 978-254-1598

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90.9 WBUR

League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle

Cambridge Housing Tenants Election

by Pat Lieberson

The LWVA was asked to supervise the second election for the Board of Directors of the Alliance of Cambridge Tenants (ACT) on April 10. ACT is an organization of residents who live in public housing or receive housing vouchers through the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA). LWVA had supervised their first election three years ago, so we knew this was going to be a big endeavor. We were initially asked to do this because we had experience supervising many elections at individual AHA housing complexes. But we have never managed an election for all AHA tenants, including voucher recipients, at once. We estimated we would need at least 14 volunteers. Recruiting them was more difficult because Arlington's Town election was held on the same day.

There were over 6,000 individuals eligible to vote in the ACT election. They could either mail in their ballots in advance or vote in person at one of six polling places at different sites in Cambridge. It was the equivalent of running an election for a small town. One of the unexpected and time-consuming aspects of this arrangement last time was the necessity to have all of the names of those who had mailed in ballots checked off in the six sets of eligible voter lists before the in-person voting began. This task alone took four people over four hours to complete. Learning from that experience, we managed to do this in less than two hours with three people through the use of electronic spread sheets.

The election was quite complicated. The tenants who live in CHA-owned properties were divided into 10 districts with a separate ballot for each. They elected a total of 19 board members. There was an additional ballot for the voucher holders, who elected another 19 members.

Two League members supervised each site on election day. They handed out the ballots and checked off the voters in the eligible voters lists. Since any voter could vote at any of the six sites, they had to make sure the voter received the right ballot from the 11 alternatives. After voting closed, eight League members gathered at the Manning Apartments site in Central Square at 7:00 p.m. to count the ballots. Prior to the actual counting, it was necessary to open the more than 250 mailed-in votes and then sort all of the ballots by district. Thankfully, the ballots were color-coded. We were able to announce the results just after 10:00 p.m.

The election process worked very well. LWVA and ACT had learned from the previous experience and were able to proceed more efficiently this time. But there was still only a 5% voter turnout. And the vast majority of them voted by mail. So setting up and having 12 people supervising six polling places was way too much work to accommodate only 42 voters. We are putting together a list of suggestions from all of our volunteers to convey to the new ACT Board how they might improve the process next time. LWVA greatly appreciates the following members who donated so much time and effort to this endeavor: Janice Bakey, Carolyn Parsons, Phyllis Maddox, Betsy Rulon, Nancy Sweeney, John Sweeney, Ann FitzGerald, Clare Gordon (now of Concord), Joan Martin, Kathy Fennelly, Marian Smith, Cathy VandenHeuvel, Vicki Ford, and Pat Leiby (a League member from Billerica).

**Now is the time to pay your annual dues, if you haven't yet done so.
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..... \$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: 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
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- Selectmen (Mondays)
- Redevelopment Board (Mondays)
- School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays)
- 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

LWVMA Council 2012
***Challenges to Democracy:
Protecting Voter Rights
and the Influence of Money***

Saturday, May 5, 2012
10:00 am-3:30 pm
Winslow Academic Center, Lasell College
1844 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA

Lunch Speaker:
Massachusetts Treasurer Steven Grossman

May 2012

League of Women Voters of Arlington
Post Office Box 461
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