

# BULLETIN

League of Women Voters  
Arlington, Massachusetts

[www.lwva.com](http://www.lwva.com)

**May 2014**

## LWVA Calendar

|      |                               |  |
|------|-------------------------------|--|
| 5/10 | Saturday<br>10 a.m. to 4 p.m. | LWVMA Council, Framingham State University. See page 8 for details.  |
| 6/5  | Thursday<br>6 p.m.            | LWVA Annual Meeting at Meredith Zona's home, 1 Andrews Way. Members will receive the Workbook by May 22. See page 8 for details. |
| 6/9  | Monday<br>7 p.m.              | Diversity Task Group Conversation at Jefferson Cutter House in Arlington Center. See page 6 for details.                         |

### LWVA LEADERSHIP 2013–2014

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| 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 |
| Joan Martin, Local Action VP        | 781-646-8192 |
| Kathleen Colwell, Treasurer         | 781-646-4522 |
| Anne Linn, Secretary                | 781-643-0356 |
| Elizabeth Thompson, Voter Service   | 781-646-5942 |
| Ann FitzGerald, Membership Director | 781-646-9711 |
| 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 |

**Carolyn Parsons and Angela Olszewski:** Co-Presidents  
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## Co-President's Message

League Board members are active, busy people. We could not agree on a date for the May Board meeting so a decision was made to skip it. This busyness is exacerbated because three Board members are Town Meeting Members. Town Meeting begins on the last Monday in April and continues every Monday and Wednesday evening until the business of the Town is concluded, usually sometime in late May or early June. The League Board has made recommendations in support of a number of warrant articles. (Please refer to the article on page 9. Did you notice the nice coverage in the *Advocate* article that printed the League's recommendations?) I thank Joan Martin, Pat Lieberman, Elizabeth Thompson, and Kathy Fennelly for compiling the list of warrant articles for the board to consider, hashing out the proper wordage, and making the flyer look appealing. It is not an easy task!

The League co-sponsored an introduction to Town Meeting with Vision 2020. The Town Moderator, John Leone, presided over the event. A gentleman newly elected to Town Meeting asked if it would be possible to see how another individual had voted so that he would be able to reciprocate appropriately to another warrant article that will come up later. Town Meeting members will be using assigned remotes to vote either yes, no, or abstain. The answer is that how an individual has voted will not be known that evening unless a roll call vote is called. Then each person's vote will be able to be viewed as Town Meeting Member's (TMM) names and their votes slowly go by on a screen precinct by precinct. Additionally, Mr. Leone advised that each TMM should be voting in the best interest of the Town. Town Meeting can be boring, informative, and even hilarious. I love learning about how well or unwell the Town functions and am prepared to have my mind changed multiple times on an individual article.

How healthy is the Mystic River? Are the herring returning to the Mystic Lakes in expected numbers? Are invasives being successfully handled? EkOngKar Singh Khalsa, Executive Director of the Mystic River Watershed Association, will answer these questions as well as your own questions at the League Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 5. Please come and enjoy the food and the conversation.

*Carolyn Parsons*

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 Meet Voters at Annual LWVA Brunch

*By Kim Haase*



The League of Women Voters of Arlington welcomed the town's three state legislators, along with a former Arlington representative, at the annual Legislators' Brunch hosted by Kathy and Paul Fennelly. State Sen. Ken Donnelly, State Rep. Sean Garballey, State Rep. Dave Rogers, and State Sen. Will Brownsberger all spoke and answered questions about current legislative issues and priorities, after thanking the Fennellys for their hospitality.

For Sen. Donnelly, the biggest issue is wage inequality. He is focusing on raising the minimum wage as well as stopping a bill that would allow managers to share in tip-jar proceeds at Dunkin' Donuts and other fast-food establishments. He stated that an increase in the minimum wage would lead to spending directly in the economy and would not destroy jobs. Currently, employers like Wal-Mart pay their employees so little that many need food stamps and Medicaid to survive.

Other priorities for Sen. Donnelly include Minuteman equity and public transportation. For example, new shopping areas in Burlington, another town in his district, have trouble attracting workers because of the shortage of buses to that area.


Rep. Rogers, a first-term representative who represents Arlington's precincts 2, 4, 8, 10, and 12, said that the greatest reward of being a legislator is being able to serve constituents directly by helping with bureaucratic glitches, since state agencies are responsive to calls from legislators. He enjoys using vehicles such as his website, newsletter, and regular coffees for communicating with constituents. His issue priorities are similar to Sen. Donnelly's: he is pleased that the minimum wage, once the House approves it, will be the highest in the country. He noted that the US has reached the level of inequality that led Theodore Roosevelt to support trust-busting and an income tax.

Rep. Rogers is also concerned about the environment, noting that the Dept. of Environmental Protection has not recovered from the recession cuts; it went from 1,200 to 800 employees, though it was never robustly funded. He also promotes criminal justice reform, hoping to transfer funds from prisons to addiction treatment.

Rep. Garballey, who represents the rest of Arlington and part of Medford, is concerned about budget issues as a member of the Ways and Means and Health Care Financing committees (and as a member of the MBTA caucus). The budget reflects our values. He and Rep. Rogers both voted against the House budget, preferring the Governor's, which raised revenue in more progressive ways. The House budget will lead to fare increases for the MBTA, since the MBTA deficit is not addressed in the budget. He did help reduce the increase in the cost of the Ride and is pleased with the start of late-night service on weekends.

*(Continued on page 5)*

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*Initial Free Consultation for League Members*

**Legislators' Brunch (continued)**

Other priorities include funding for public higher education and the minimum wage increase (he prefers the Senate bill, which raises it more). Rep. Garballey noted that the culture of the legislature is shifting; the future Senate president will be the most progressive one ever. Because of turnover, he himself is now 65th in seniority out of 160 after just six years in office.

Sen. Brownsberger, who now represents Belmont, Watertown, and parts of Boston after serving as a representative for two Arlington precincts, is focusing on raising the statute of limitations on child sexual abuse and on increasing the transparency of the MBTA pension fund, among other things.

League members and guests raised the following issues:

- The DEP and development in the Alewife area: there is severe pressure on the environment from the increasing development in this area, and the League has had longstanding positions on this.
- Taxation of the wealthy: The legislators noted that imposing a graduated income tax or higher capital gains taxes is unlikely, and that such taxation would work best at the national level. The best bet now is to increase deductions and the earned-income tax credit for lower income people, while helping to reduce tax breaks such as the aviation and film tax credits, which primarily benefit the wealthy but not the general economy.
- The Metco program: All the legislators support it, though they would prefer to make Metco payments more reflective of the actual costs to the host communities.
- Defining the middle class: All agreed that the middle class (though hard to define) was being squeezed because even median-income families are struggling as wages decline.
- The Department of Children and Families, where social worker caseloads are overwhelming: Sen. Donnelly noted that there are many unfilled openings because of low salaries, huge responsibilities, and safety concerns. Rep Garballey said that the DCF needs greater support, and firing the commissioner is not the answer.
- Spending priorities for the legislators: These included (in addition to those already mentioned) homelessness, legal aid, local aid to education, the special education circuit breaker, and the disabled turning 22. Rep. Rogers noted that the Ways and Means chair allows each member to bring him no more than three issues for the budget. He also noted that since revenue seems to be increasing, perhaps they can fund more priorities.
- Recycling: a League member asked the legislators to oppose S379, which would essentially overturn the Bottle Bill (it is sponsored by a legislator whose district includes Polar Beverages).
- Election law reform: A conference is working to reconcile a more inclusive Senate version with a narrower House version.

## Vision 2020 Sponsors Conversation About Diversity

As our community becomes more diverse in many ways, the Vision 2020 Diversity Task Group is sponsoring a series of discussions focusing on *We Are Arlington*. What are the opportunities and stresses that diversity creates? Everyone is invited to attend any or all of the dialogues. We want to hear your thoughts!

The final conversation, *We Are Many Social Classes*, will take place on **Monday, June 9**, at the Jefferson Cutter House Gallery in Arlington Center. Enter from the parking lot behind the building. Networking and snacks begin at 7 p.m.; the discussion begins at 7:30.

For more information, feel free to contact Claire Carswell, [cgcarswell@comcast.net](mailto:cgcarswell@comcast.net), 617-680-0409 or Bonie Williamson, [bagchiwilliamson@yahoo.com](mailto:bagchiwilliamson@yahoo.com), 781-777-1749.



**Salutes the  
League of Women Voters  
for its contribution to  
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## Photos from Recent League-Sponsored Events

*All photos by Phyllis Maddox*



Rep. Dave Rogers, Sen. Ken Donnelly, Rep. Sean Garballey, and Sen. Will Brownsberger at the March 30 Legislators' Brunch hosted by Kathy and Paul Fennelly (story on pp. 3-5).



Patti Muldoon of the LWVA with the candidates for Town Treasurer, Julie Dunn and Stephen Gilligan, at Candidates' Night March 20.



Margaret Coppe of the LWV of Lexington with the candidates for Selectman: Diane Mahon, Dan Dunn, and Bob Tosi.



## LWVMA Council to Focus on Civility

The 2014 LWVMA Council "***Civility in Politics: Challenge to Good Government***" will be held Saturday, May 10, 2014 at Framingham State University.

The deadline for registration is May 5. To register, visit <http://lwvma.org/2014-council/>.

Council this year will focus on the issue of civility in elections and government. In this era of blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and talk radio, the lack of civil discourse is making its way into town and city politics. You may have seen the impact in your own town. This incivility is affecting whether candidates are willing to run for public offices and to serve on public boards and committees. We will consider this issue and explore roles for LWV in improving the civic conversation, particularly at the local level. Council is an opportunity for League members to come together to share League experiences, explore the topic, learn what's happening around the state, and attend workshops to help you and your League be more effective. All members of LWVMA are welcome to attend Council, including local League members and Members-at-Large.

Our guest speaker, Susan M. Jeghelian, is the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC), a statutory state agency at the University of Massachusetts Boston that functions as a neutral forum and state-level resource for public policy dispute resolution and collaborative governance.

- 10 am Registration
- 10:30 am General Assembly
- 12:30 pm Lunch and Guest Speaker: Susan M. Jeghelian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC)
- 1:45 pm Civility Matters – One league's program to change the way people talk to each other about contentious issues and encourage citizens to participate in governance
- 2:25 pm Workshop Session 1 (See website for workshop topics)
- 3:15 pm Workshop Session 2
- 4:00 pm Adjourn

### **Preview: LWVA Annual Meeting June 5**

The LWVA Annual Meeting will take place at Meredith Zona's home, 1 Andrews Way, on Thursday, June 5 starting at 6 p.m. Potluck appetizers and dinner will be followed by the program and formal meeting. Please come and bring a spouse, neighbor, or friend!

Our guest speaker will be EkOngKar Singh Khalsa, Executive Director of the Mystic River Watershed Association. Mr. Khalsa has 25 years of professional experience in environmental protection and restoration, low impact and Brownfields development, as well as a broad understanding of the public policy issues associated with these arenas. These dovetail with the Arlington League's decades of interest in this watershed along much of Arlington's borders.

The Annual Meeting Workbook will be sent to all members by May 22.



## **The League of Women Voters of Arlington**

### **Warrant Article Recommendations**

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports the approval of the following warrant articles to be considered at the 2014 Annual Town Meeting: 8, 11, 22, 39, 40, 44, 54, and 55. We support article 6 in the Special Town Meeting.

The League supports article 8, Outdoor Lighting/Dark Skies bylaw because of the impact of artificial lighting on the natural environment and bird migration.

The League supports article 11, electronic voting for Town Meeting, article 54, which would ask if electronic voting has the ongoing support of Town Meeting, and article 55 which would appropriate funds for lease of equipment for electronic voting. The support for articles 54 and 55 presupposes that the electronic tally and display system is both accurate and efficient. The League, a strong proponent of representative Town Meeting, believes electronic voting will provide accountability and transparency. The public will be able to access the individual votes of each Town Meeting Member for a minimum of three years.

The League supports article 22, Acceptance of Legislation/Community Preservation Act, which would establish a fund to enable the Town to acquire and preserve open space, create and restore land for recreational uses, preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and sites, and create and support affordable housing. If the article is approved by Town Meeting, a question would be placed on the Town ballot, for determination by the voters as to whether to impose a surcharge tax on real estate to create the fund. The League neither supports nor opposes the surcharge tax, only that the question be put before the voters to promote the democratic process.

The League supports article 39, Maintenance of Water Bodies, which will provide an appropriation to the Water Bodies Fund for maintenance, treatment, and oversight.

The League supports article 40, which will provide a stipend of \$750 for ten seniors who are able to work in Town departments.

*(Continued on next page)*

## Warrant Article Recommendations (Continued)

The League supports article 44, Appropriation for Historical Sites Signage, to promote the historic resources of the town.

The League supports article 6 of the Special Town Meeting which would appropriate a sum of money for the cost of emergency repairs to the Pierce Elementary School. The maintenance of the quality of the school buildings is a key aspect of creating a proper physical environment for the education of Arlington students.

When board members of the League of Women Voters of Arlington decide which articles of the warrant we support or oppose, we utilize principles that the League at the United States, Massachusetts or town level have already endorsed after careful study. These principles are **Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources** and **Social Policy**. At the local level the League has positions on conservation and recreation, education, human resources, the library system, town government, town planning, and cable television and related media.

We gather information to establish the intent and probable outcome of an article and determine whether it promotes better governance and public policy as expressed in existing League principles. Most articles fall outside the scope of our existing principles, so we do not comment on them.

We hope you will appreciate that these recommendations do not come from a quick vote of a small group, but come out of a careful process of investigation, discussion and consensus. In turn, we expect you to look into these issues for yourselves and to vote in the best interest of the Town.

*Carolyn Parsons (TMM, Pct. 18) and Angela Olszewski (TMM, Pct. 17)  
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of Arlington*

**Our Fiscal Year began April 1, so please renew 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_ 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

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

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

\*Some of these can be seen on cable TV

## Thanks to Our Volunteer Drivers!

As always, we are very grateful to our volunteer drivers for the Town Election on April 5.

Kathy Fennelly and Ann FitzGerald drove a few committed voters to the polls. In an election with relatively low turnout, we appreciate those who vote as well as those who can help them do so.

— *Phyllis Maddox*

**MAY 2014**

League of Women Voters of Arlington  
Post Office Box 461  
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