



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

November, 2008

No. 111

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

League of Women Voters of Weston

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This LWV/Weston Newsletter is published monthly except July and August. The LWV is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age.

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This extremely exciting election season has ended with a flourish. The League has been involved in many aspects of the process here in Weston, starting with our Candidates' Forum back in September, which featured the two Wellesley Democrats, Alice Peisch and Larry Kaplan, vying for the nomination for State Representative. We were disappointed not to have had an opportunity to provide a similar Candidates' Forum for Senator Susan Fargo and her challenger, Sandi Martinez.

We followed up with a letter to the Editor of the Town Crier warning of the dangers of passing referendum Question #1, which would have eliminated the state income tax. This was a high-priority item for the Massachusetts State League. We also flew our Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport banner for a week in the town center and drove six senior citizens to the polls on Election Day. My thanks to Robin Reisman and Lenore Lobel for providing this service. In addition, many League board members served at the polls, as inspectors or as tellers (See article on Page 5).

We are on the verge of launching our League website, which will link to the town website and include information on League history and positions at the local, state and national League level. It will also list upcoming events of a political and civic nature, information on communicating with elected officials and issues of our League Bulletin. Many thanks to Beth Keane and Cat Laine for their persistence in bringing this website to fruition. The website should be ready to go live by the time next month's Bulletin comes out.

Our membership enrollment is lagging, and I urge those of you who may not have sent in your dues this year to check your checkbooks and communicate with Rochelle Nemrow if you think you may be delinquent. It gives the League more clout if

we can keep our numbers strong, even if you can't be actively involved.

Upcoming events include a fall Town Meeting on Monday, December 1 at the High School. We hope to schedule a Coffee Hour in February that will feature Representative Alice Peisch and Senator Susan Fargo, so we can get an update on their legislative priorities in the new year.

We have scheduled our League book club for February 11th. We will be reading Michael Pollan's best-seller *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, which comes highly recommended by more than one enthusiastic board member. We also are making plans for a Civics Bee on March 1st in Wayland, in cooperation (and competition?) with the Wayland and Sudbury Leagues. Details can be found elsewhere in this Bulletin.

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2008 – MARCH 2009

December 1, Monday	Special Town Meeting
7:30 P.M. Weston High School Auditorium	
December 9, Tuesday	LWW Open Meeting
9:15 A.M., 169 Claybrook Rd, Dover, MA (Robin Reisman, 781-235-0005)	
January 13, Tuesday	LWW Open Meeting
9:15 A.M., 56 Bogle St., Weston, MA (Kathy Rousseau, (781) 235-6559)	
February 11, Tuesday	LWW Book Club:
7:30 P.M., location TBA	Michael Pollan, "The Omnivore's Dilemma"
March 1, Sunday	Civics Bee – sponsored by
Wayland Town Building	Wayland, Weston, Sudbury
March 9, Monday	Town Caucus
7:30 P.M., Town Hall Auditorium	

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Kathleen Rousseau

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

President

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Senators

- The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
2400 JFK Building
Boston, MA 02203
(617)565-3170

317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-4543

senator@kennedy.senate.gov

- The Honorable John F. Kerry
One Bowdin Square, Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617)565-8519

304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202)224-2742

E-mail: john_kerry@kerry.senate.gov

U.S. Representative 7th District

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
(781)396-2900

(202)225-2836

2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

(202)225-2836

<http://www.house.gov/markey>

Governor

Governor Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 360
Boston MA 02133

(617)727-3600

E-mail: Goffice@state.ma.us

State Senator 5th Middlesex District

The Honorable Susan Fargo
(617)722-1572

State House, Room 505

Boston MA 02133-1054

E-mail: sfargo@senate.state.ma.us

Home: (781) 259-9623

State Representative 4th Norfolk District

The Honorable Alice Hanlon Peisch

(617)722-2080

(781)237-4719

State House, Room 26

Boston MA 02133-1054

E-mail: rep.alicepeisch@hou.state.ma.us

The board met at the home of Kathie Strehle on November 7, 2008.

The treasurer announced that we have paid half of our per-member-payments to the national and state leagues. It looks like we will have to have a fund-raiser in the near future to meet our budget.

As it is, our PMPs are not fully covered by our dues (\$51 per person total).

There was a long discussion about what sort of fund-raiser to have. The idea of a house party with an interesting speaker (or panel) looked promising. A subcommittee was formed to further discuss this idea.

Coffee Hours: There do not seem to be any pressing issues at this time. Katty will contact Alice Peisch and Susan Fargo to see if there is a time when they can meet with us. This will probably be in February or January.

We are still planning to participate in the "Civics Bee" sponsored by the Wayland and Sudbury leagues. This will involve a team with middle school, high school, and adult members.

No artificial turf will be used for the Alphabet field. We should thank Barbara Fullerton for her research on this subject and her willingness to stick to it.

Voter Service: We held a high school registration. Information was also provided to the students about proposition #1 on the ballot; the only one that the league took a position on. Our banner has been hanging in the center of town. Some of our members provided rides to the polls on election day.

Website: Our new website is almost up and running. It will contain a calendar with our events and those of the town, links to the Secretary of State, information on voting (registration, polling places), government members, and our local league positions. There will also be current and past bulletins and links to the state and national league websites.

We will have a discussion of “The Omnivore’s Dilemma” on February 11 at 7:30 at Rochelle Lurie’s. “The Nine” by Jeffrey Toobin. was suggested as another book that we might want to read.

Lenore will be going down to Pearlinton for one last weekend of work on the new Community Center. The county will take care of the landscaping and interior. A dedication of the building will take place on March 21



INTER-TOWN CIVICS BEE MARCH 1, 2009

The Weston League has been invited to join Wayland and Sudbury in a regional civics bee, to be held in the Wayland Town Building on March 1, 2009. The recent Presidential election has aroused an extraordinary level of interest in our democracy, which we want to encourage.

Each town will have a team of 9 people: 3 middle school students, 3 high school students, and 3 adults who will compete against the other town teams. They will be asked fundamental questions on civics, including the U.S. Constitution, the federal government, and American history.

We are still in the planning stages, co-operating with Wayland and Sudbury LWVs to recruit players, coaches, and helpers with logistics such as publicity and formation of questions. Dr. Cheryl Maloney, Weston Superintendent of Schools, is enthusiastic about the project and we will be consulting with the middle and high schools on how to proceed with creating a Weston team.

We do need participation from YOU to make this exciting event happen! Please contact any of us if you have any interest in helping to create community and strengthen democracy.

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Diana Chaplin Diana@greatestate.com 781-893-6288
Katty Chace TackC@aol.com 781-891-1087

ELECTION DAY IN WESTON: CONFESSIONS OF A TELLER

Sally Currier

Tuesday, November 4 was an exciting day. Of Weston's 7961 registered voters, 6,458 of them, 81%, turned out to cast their ballots in the presidential and state elections. When the results were tallied, Weston voters chose the Obama-Biden ticket, 60% of the total, versus 37.8% for the McCain-Palin ticket. Senator John Kerry and Representative Ed Markey carried Weston with 58% and 58.7% of the votes, respectively. Devaney won re-election as Councilor. Incumbent State Senator Susan Fargo won 53% of Weston's votes, versus 38.9% for challenger Sandi Martinez. Alice Peisch ran unopposed in the general election after winning the Democratic Primary in September, and she won 65.4% of the ballots cast. DeCristofaro carried Weston in the race for Register of Probate.

Joining several other Weston residents, I had the opportunity to work as a teller, counting write-ins and partial ballots and tallying these results with those from the voting machines. Staff members in the Town Clerk's office seek out volunteer poll workers and tellers to work in each of the four precincts. We were trained prior to Election Day. Just before 8 PM on Tuesday evening, I arrived at St. Demetrios Church with three others to be sworn in and to begin counting the ballots. Two teams of two volunteers worked together tallying ballots and write-ins for each precinct.

Setting up an election and counting the votes seems like such a simple process. But it is an organizational feat that requires careful work and attention to detail. Many rules are in place to ensure the integrity of the election; thus, only certain people can work on certain tasks and the tallying must be well documented.

At 8 PM, my partner and I opened envelopes containing the partial ballots and tallied the

results for each of the races. We were initially told that there were few write-in ballots, but we were then presented with 50 ballots. That may not sound like much, but each write-in must be documented and tallied into the total. Each write-in must be entered separately and accounted for, even if a voter chooses to write in the name of his best friend, his girlfriend, Dumbo, Minnie Mouse, or "anybody but" These, however were a minority. We all commented that in the future, we would think twice before ever writing in a name!

Finally we must reconcile our vote totals with the number of ballots cast. Thus, if the machine says that there were 27 write-in votes, we must account for each and every vote. At one point, my partner and I counted and then examined our ballots to reconcile the number of write-in votes with the total counted by the machine, a process that took a good ten minutes. In the end, a voter had written in a name for one of the races but forgot to fill in the "write-in" circle on the ballot, which the machine counts. Guess what? That write-in vote does not count!

It took us about two hours to complete our work. The election staff, most of whom had been working all day, waited patiently for us to finish, so that they could bundle up the ballots and put them all away in a secure place. By 10 PM, we had finished.

I am so pleased to have volunteered in this way, and I highly recommend this experience to others. I met some interesting people who live in town and I came away with more insight into the considerable organization and effort required to run an election even in a relatively small town such as Weston.

OBSERVER CORPS
Submitted by Jean Thurston

WESTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN - MEETING AGENDA
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2008, 7:30 P.M.

<u>Time</u>	<u>Tab</u>	
7:30 p.m.	1.	Case Estates Building Advisory Committee - Final Report Members of CEBAC
8:15 p.m.	2.	Conservation Commission Appointment
8:30 p.m.	3.	NStar and Verizon Pole Relocation Hearing – 54 Rolling Lane Christine Cosby, NSTAR
8:35 p.m.	4.	National Grid-Gas Main Installation at 73 Spruce Hill Road
8:40 p.m.	5.	Request for Exemptions under MGL Ch. 268A Brian Donahue, Conservation Commission
8:55 p.m.	6.	Fire Pumper Truck Request Chief David Soar
9:10 p.m.	7.	Adopt Special Town Meeting Warrant
9:20 p.m.	8.	Northeastern University Tuition Vouchers
9:25 p.m.	9.	Lease of 68 Warren Avenue
9:35 p.m.	10.	Approve Firefighters' Collective Bargaining Agreement for 7/1/07-6/30/10
9:40 p.m.	11.	Executive Session (exemption 6)

Consent Agenda

Approve minutes of the following Board of Selectmen's meetings: October 14, 2008

Accept a gift of \$47.65 from the Friends of the Council on Aging made to the Council on Aging for shopping transportation to be applied to the Transportation Gift Fund.

Accept a gift of \$1,225.00 from the Weston Seniors made to the Council on Aging for In-Control Driving Class, transportation and lunch to be applied to the Miscellaneous Gift Fund.

Approve request by Facilities Manager Gin Stanley of The Cambridge School of Weston to install a convex safety mirror across the street from Georgian Road. The request has been reviewed and approved by DPW Director Bob Hoffman with conditions: the mirror cannot be nailed on to a tree and must be far enough off the road that it won't hit the snowplow mirrors.

Approve submission of Quiet Zone Affirmation to be submitted to Federal Railroad Administration with regard to railroad crossings in Weston.



WARRANT FOR SPECIAL TOWN MEETING December 1, 2008

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Middlesex, ss.

To any Constable in the Town of Weston, Greetings:

In the name of The Commonwealth you are hereby required to notify and warn the voters of said Town, qualified to vote in elections and Town affairs, to meet in the Auditorium of the Senior High School in said Town, and also in the Gymnasium of the Senior High School if the number of voters in attendance shall exceed the capacity of the Auditorium, on Monday, the first day of December 2008, at 7:30 o'clock p.m., to act upon the following articles:

ARTICLE 1: AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2009 OPERATING BUDGET:

To amend the following line items in the Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget adopted under Article 2 of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting as follows:

	<u>Changing From</u>	<u>Changing To</u>	<u>Difference</u>
School Department-Salaries	\$25,555,150	\$25,622,150	\$67,000
Reserve Fund	460,000	552,000	92,000

Article 1 Explanation: This article provides for funding in the School budget for an additional Kindergarten section and additional funds in the Finance Committee's Reserve Fund for increased energy costs that were not anticipated. The funding needed will come from additional state aid received in Fiscal Year 2009.

ARTICLE 2: AMEND FISCAL YEAR 2009 WATER ENTERPRISE BUDGET:

To supplement certain parts of the Fiscal Year 2009 Water Enterprise budget adopted under Article 3 of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting as follows:

	<u>Changing From</u>	<u>Changing To</u>	<u>Difference</u>
MMRA Assessment/Water Purchases	\$1,671,986	\$1,743,476	\$71,490

And as funding therefor, that \$71,490 be transferred from Water Enterprise fund retained earnings; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 2 Explanation: This article is to provide additional funding for the cost of purchasing water from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. The amount of the assessment relates to the water pumped in the previous calendar year. Weston's share of the water use was higher than anticipated during the budget process.

ARTICLE 3: APPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY

To appropriate a sum of money for the purchase of computer networking hardware and other data communications equipment, to be spent under the direction of the School Committee, the money so appropriated to be raised by borrowing under the authority of M.G.L. Chapter 44, section 7, or any other enabling authority, and to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to issue bonds or notes; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 3 Explanation: This request is the first in a three to four phase replacement of network switching and wireless equipment for the Weston Public Schools and the Town of Weston. The network infrastructure is the foundation upon which all information services are built. It is essential that this infrastructure be stable, secure, and robust enough to handle current and future needs. Within the next few years our computer network will be called upon to transport voice (telephone) traffic, HVAC monitoring information, security monitoring information, and security video for the Schools/Town. The network switching infrastructure of the Weston Public Schools is in critical need of immediate replacement for three important reasons: age of equipment, capability, and management. Our switching equipment is not capable of handling the bandwidth required to reasonably image and manage our computers and the switching equipment itself cannot be managed and monitored. Most of our switching equipment is 5 to 9 years old with capabilities consistent with late 1990's networking technologies. Even more pressing is the lack of a wireless networking solution that is stable, manageable, and secure. We are using off-the-shelf consumer equipment that cannot be centrally managed or monitored. Our wireless networking is unreliable and a security liability that must be dealt with as soon as possible. The amount requested for this first phase is \$300,000 with subsequent requests being outlined within the framework of a five year technology plan. A two-thirds vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 4: APPROPRIATE FOR FIRE PUMPER TRUCK REPLACEMENT

To appropriate a sum of money for the cost of departmental equipment for the Fire Department and all incidental costs related thereto, to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager, the money so appropriated to be raised by borrowing under the authority of M.G.L. Chapter 44, section 7, or any other enabling authority, and to authorize the Town Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to issue bonds or notes; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 4 Explanation: This request is to replace a 1990 E-1 pumper truck that had to be removed from service in 2007 because the frame was rotted, and the truck could no longer be repaired. Since that time, we have been able to use trucks on loan from the Brookline and Lincoln Fire Departments, but those trucks are no longer available. A request of this nature would normally be made at annual town meeting, but there is currently a truck available for purchase now at a lower price than would be the case if we waited until the next fiscal year. The amount expected to be requested is \$400,000. The same truck is estimated to cost approximately \$75,000 more if it is ordered after July 1, 2009. A two-thirds vote of Town Meeting is required for approval of this article.

ARTICLE 5: APPROPRIATE FOR OPEN SPACE – TREATMENT OF HEMLOCK TREES

To appropriate a sum of money for the preservation of open space under the Community Preservation Program, to be used for the treatment of hemlock trees on land under the jurisdiction of the Conservation Commission against infestation by the woolly adelgid, to be spent under the direction of the Town Manager, and as funding therefore, to transfer said sum from the Open Space allocation of the Community Preservation Fund; or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 5 Explanation: Weston has only a handful of superb stands of Eastern hemlock on its conservation land. Hemlock trees are now suffering an infestation of hemlock woolly adelgid, an aphid-like insect from Asia. Mortality among hemlocks afflicted with woolly adelgid has been very high – often 100% of a stand. The Conservation Commission has spent \$5,000 from its operating budget this fall to begin the treatment process on the most damaged hemlock stand on Town land in the Highland Forest. The amount expected to be requested under this article is \$25,000, and it will be used to complete the treatment of this stand in the early spring and also to selectively treat a few other areas. Similar funding requests are expected to be made in the future to continue the treatment program.

ARTICLE 6: APPOINTED TOWN CLERK

To authorize the Board of Selectmen to petition the General Court for a Special Act to read as follows, provided, however, that the General Court may make clerical or editorial changes of form only to the bill, unless the Board of Selectmen approve amendments to bill before enactment by the General Court; and provided further that the Board of Selectmen is hereby authorized to approve amendments which shall be within the scope of the general public objectives of this petition:

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE TOWN CLERK OF THE TOWN OF WESTON

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:

SECTION 1. The position of town clerk in the town of Weston shall be appointed.

SECTION 2. Section 2 of chapter 80 of the acts of 2001 is hereby amended by striking out the first sentence in subsection (c) (ii) and inserting in place thereof the following sentence: "The town manager shall recommend to the board of selectmen for its appointment candidates for the positions of town clerk, chief of the fire department, forest warden, police chief, and director of public works."

SECTION 3. Section 2 of chapter 80 of the acts of 2001 is hereby further amended by striking the text in subsection (c)(v)(1) and renumbering the remaining sections of said subsection (c)(v) accordingly.

SECTION 4. Notwithstanding the provisions of any general or special law to the contrary, upon the approval of this act by the voters as set forth in section 5, the position of elected town clerk in the Town of Weston shall be abolished, and the term of the elected incumbent holding office, if any, shall be terminated; provided, however, that any individual elected to the position of town clerk at the same election at which the question set forth in section 5 appears on the ballot shall hold said office and perform the duties thereof until the appointment to said office is otherwise made in accordance with the provisions of chapter 80 of the acts of 2001, as amended in accordance with section 2 of this act, or the individual's sooner resignation.

SECTION 5. This act shall be submitted for its acceptance to the qualified voters of the town of Weston at an annual or special election in the form of the following question:

"Shall an act passed by the General Court in the year 2009, entitled 'An Act Relative to the Town Clerk of the Town of Weston,' be accepted?"

Below the ballot question shall appear a fair and concise summary of the ballot question prepared by town counsel and approved by the Board of Selectmen.

If a majority of the votes cast in answer to the question is in the affirmative, the provisions of Sections 1 through 4 of this act shall take effect in the Town of Weston, but not otherwise.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect upon passage. Or take any other action relative thereto.

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 6 Explanation: The Committee to Examine Town Government issued a report to the Board of Selectmen in August, 2000, titled, "Review of Town Government Organization." This report examined the organizational structure of the Town's government and made recommendations regarding many of the Town's major functions and positions. Since 2000, many organizational recommendations have been implemented, including the adoption of a Town Manager bylaw that defines executive duties; the creation of the position of Finance Director to assist the Town Manager; and the creation of positions shared jointly between Town and School Departments, such as the Town wide Technology Coordinator and Town wide Facilities Director. Other recommendations have been idle, waiting for the appropriate time to implement. One such recommendation was to change from an elected Town Clerk to an appointed Town Clerk so the position can be integrated more closely with the general government structure of the Town, and to be sure that future Town Clerks will have the experience necessary to fulfill their duties. The functions of the Town Clerk in recent years have demanded ongoing, professional training of full-time office staff in order to comply with state laws and best serve residents. Although the Assistant Town Clerk position and office staff perform 95% of the Town Clerk duties involving elections, census, vital statistics, dog licenses, and open meeting law postings, the Assistant Town Clerk position is not eligible to grow professionally and receive state certification as a Municipal Clerk because the Assistant position does not have the full designation as the Town Clerk. With the announced resignation of the current Town Clerk, and expiration of the Town Clerk's current term in 2010, it is perfect timing to implement the Committee to Examine Town Government's recommendation from August, 2000, that the position of Town Clerk is changed from elected to appointed.

If Town Meeting approves this Article, it will then go to the Legislature and Governor for approval. Following this approval, the Act would then be placed on a Town ballot for consideration by the voters of Weston.

ARTICLE 7: AMEND GENERAL BYLAWS, ARTICLE II – ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

To amend Article II of the Town's General By-Laws by deleting Section 6 in its entirety and replacing it with the following:

"Section 6 The Town Clerk shall cause printed copies of the annual town report to be made available for Town residents at the Town Library, Town Hall and at other such locations determined by the Board of Selectmen, not less than seven days before the day fixed for the annual town meeting."

Or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 7 Explanation: The amendment to Section 6 removes the requirement to deliver the annual town report to each household. Instead, the annual town report will be made available to be picked up at various town locations and will continue to be posted on the Town's website. This will save the Town over \$7,000 in mailing and printing costs, and it will be more environmentally friendly than printing thousands of copies that are disposed of by those who are not interested in reading it. Notice that the annual town report is available will be included with one of the three mailings that is sent to all households before the annual town meeting.

ARTICLE 8: BOSTON PROPERTIES – DECLARATION OF RESTRICTION

To authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept on behalf of the Town a restrictive covenant with respect to a parcel of land consisting of approximately 73.977 acres located off Boston Post Road in Weston, as shown on a plan entitled "Plan of Land in Waltham, MA (Middlesex County) and Weston, MA (Middlesex County)," dated April 19, 1995, prepared by Beals and Thomas, Inc., recorded with the Middlesex South District Registry of Deeds on November 15, 2001 as Plan No. 1135 of 2001, on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen shall deem appropriate, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 8 Explanation: This article is needed to implement the agreement entered into by the Selectmen in June of 2008 to settle the litigation with Boston Properties regarding permitting and approvals for the development of the former Mass Broken Stone quarry site. The settlement terms include a requirement that Boston Properties restrict the 74-acre site to certain use and development parameters, as approved by the Board of Appeals through the special permit process. A Town Meeting vote is needed to authorize the Selectmen to accept the restriction, which will be enforceable for at least 100 years.

And you are to serve the warrant by posting four attested copies thereof at the Town Hall, at the Kendal Green Railroad Station, at the Town of Weston Transfer Station and on the kiosk at the front of the high school by the gymnasium, fourteen days at least before the time appointed for said meeting.

Hereof fail not to make due return of this warrant with your doings thereon to the Selectmen at the time and place of said meeting.

Given under our hands November 10, 2008

Steven L. Charlip
Douglas P. Gillespie
Michael H. Harrity
Selectmen of the Town of Weston