



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

October, 2009

No. 120

League of Women Voters of Weston

President..... Katty Chace
781-891-1087

Treasurer..... Kathie Strehle
508-358-8937

Voter Service.....Sally Currier
781-235-9506

Membership..... Rochelle Nemrow
781-790-1138

Bulletin..... Katherine Wolfthal
Editor 781-891-9549

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.

League of Women Voters of Weston
15 Conant Road, Weston MA 02493

VOTER INFORMATION

1-800-882-1649

League of Women Voters
of Massachusetts
133 Portland Street
Boston MA 02114
(617)523-2999

Submit articles to Katherine Wolfthal in
typewritten hard copy or by e-mail to
kate@weichi.com

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

I would like to start by correcting some misinformation in my article which stated that the Special Town Meeting scheduled for November 30 would authorize design fees for the Josiah Smith Tavern renovation. In fact, design fees were authorized at last spring's Annual Town Meeting. The final consideration of the whole project has now been moved back to next spring's Annual Town Meeting, and the fall town meeting will be asking for funds to carry forth the Josiah Smith Tavern Committee's work until May. The League is hosting a coffee hour on Saturday, October 31 at the Tavern Barn which will be an opportunity for residents to ask questions (see boxed announcement below).

The Massachusetts League is preparing to sponsor a series of candidate forums across the state in the special election to fill the U.S. Senate seat previously held by Senator Edward Kennedy. The first of the two Primary Forums will take place on Sunday, November 8, 2009 in Bowker Auditorium on the UMASS Amherst campus. The second Primary Forum is scheduled for Tuesday, November 17 at Assumption College in Worcester. The League encourages all candidates in the special election to participate in these forums, which are free and open to the public. For more information, please call 617-523-2999.

Our League, in conjunction with the Wayland and Sudbury Leagues, continues to work on the planning of our 2nd Annual Civics Bee on Sunday, March 21 in the Amy Potter Center at the Weston Middle School. Once again, each town will field a team of nine, consisting of three adults, three High School students and three Middle School students. The questions will be expanded beyond last year's scope of the Constitution, the Amendments and the Bill of Rights, to include issues of state government, especially timely because of next year's

gubernatorial election. If you would like to help plan the event, or, better yet, would like to volunteer to be a team member, please call me at 781-891-1087.

If you haven't yet paid your membership dues for the current year (i.e.; since June) please use the membership renewal form in this Bulletin. We would like to welcome new members Barbara Flannery and Bev Foster to our ranks.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2009

| | |
|--|---|
| October 21, Wednesday 7:30 P.M., 56 Bogle St. (Kathy Rousseau, 781-235-6559) | LWVW Book Club <i>The Nine</i> by Jeffrey Toobin |
| October 31, Saturday 11:00 A.M. Josiah Smith Tavern Barn | LWVW Coffee Hour Josiah Smith Tavern Renovation Project |
| November 8, Sunday | Pre-Primary Candidates' Forum for U.S. Senatorial Election |
| November 10, Tuesday 9:15 A.M., 61 Beaver Rd. (Rochelle Nemrow, 781-790-1138) | LWVW Board Meeting |
| November 17, Sunday | Pre-Primary Candidates' Forum for U.S. Senatorial Election |
| November 30, Monday 7:30 P.M. – Weston High School Auditorium | Special Town Meeting |
| December 8, Tuesday | U.S. Senatorial Primary |
| January 19, 2010, Tuesday | U.S. Senatorial Election |

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

President

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

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)722-2230
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 26
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: rep.alicepeisch@hou.state.ma.us

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Katherine Strehle
Acting Secretary

The board met at the home of Katherine Wolfthal on October 14, 2009. Present were Robin Coutts, Katherine Wolfthal, Rochelle Nemrow, and Kathie Strehle, with Katty Chace presiding.

MINUTES: The spelling of Inge Uhler's name was corrected from Euler. The minutes were approved as corrected.

TREASURER'S REPORT: We will be paying the second quarter PMPs to state and national this month. Total Massachusetts annual PMP will be some \$200 less than originally estimated, due to our declining number of members. Rochelle noted that most members are renewing at the suggested rate of \$60, which includes a \$5 contribution. We currently have \$1,291.36 in Cambridge Trust.

MEMBERSHIP: Rochelle handed out a list of renewed members, as well as a list of those who have been members in the previous two years but have not renewed. She suggested that each of us print out membership forms to have handy whenever we see someone who hasn't renewed yet.

COFFEE HOUR: We have scheduled the October 31 coffee hour at the library for a discussion of the Josiah Smith Tavern project. Katty announced that the vote on the issue will be postponed from the November 30 Special Town Meeting to the Spring Annual Town Meeting. One person has urged her that the LWV should do a study of the project. The board feels that this is a topic appropriate for education but not advocacy; it is a quality of life issue. Katty asked whether our coffee hour should be postponed to a date closer to the actual Town Meeting vote, but the board agreed that there are many questions – alcohol, traffic, whether the Town should be in the restaurant business - that should be dealt with now. The JST committee has also expressed a desire for an informational meeting sooner rather than later.

We will list a number of questions to be addressed, and solicit questions ahead of time as part of our publicity for the Oct. 31 meeting. Road signs should be put in place as well.

FUNDRAISER: No progress has been made on this project. One suggestion was to have an online auction; the New York Audubon Society is doing so. Everyone is urged to think of a speaker who would attract people.

CIVICS BEE: Since Weston won the First Annual Civics Bee in March, we will be hosting the three-town (Sudbury and Wayland are the others) event in 2010. It is scheduled for Sunday, March 21, from 2-4:30 p.m. in the Amy Potter Center. The President of LWV-Mass, Zahara Bennett, has agreed to be the moderator. Subjects will include the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and amendments, as well as some material on state government. Katty and Kathie are working with the Bee Committee, which will hold its next meeting Oct. 15.

PHONATHON: LWV-Mass volunteers will be calling this month. Each local league gets a

percentage of the total raised. The state League lost some major corporate underwriters this year, so is in particularly difficult straits. Robin suggested we might try to get local underwriters for our programs, such as coffee hours.

SENATE PRIMARY & ELECTION: The state LWV is sponsoring debates at UMass Boston, UMass Amherst, and Assumption College. We might arrange transportation to a debate, or better yet have a "TV watch" in someone's living room.

LOCAL STUDY: Our study on the Open Meeting Law will be considered at next month's board meeting.

BOOK DISCUSSION: The Nine, by Jeffrey Toobin, will be discussed by our local book group on Wed., Oct. 21, at Kathy Rousseau's house. All are welcome.

BULLETIN: Katherine asked that all articles, minutes, etc. be sent to her by Sunday night Oct. 18.

NEXT MEETING: November 10, place to be determined.



Coffee Hour



The Josiah Smith Tavern and the Old Library conversion will be the topic of our next Coffee Hour on Saturday, October 31 at 11:00 am. The Coffee Hour will take place at the Tavern Barn instead of the usual location at the library. Josh and Jed Webber, principals of the Webber Group which has been selected to manage the restaurant, will be present to exhibit the plans for the proposed renovation and to share their vision for the restaurant. Although the vote to authorize construction funding for this project has been delayed until the Town Meeting in May, 2010, Weston residents will be asked to approve additional Community Preservation Act funds for the development plans at the Special Town Meeting on November 30, 2009. Refreshments will be served.

MEMBERSHIP

We wish to thank our new and renewing members for their support. Their names are listed below.

If your name is not on this list, please don't forget to renew your membership in the Weston League of Women voters. Please do it now, while you're thinking of it! Remember that it is only through your continued support that our League can thrive.

A membership form is included at the end of this Bulletin.

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Cynthia Berg | Christie Hedges |
| Jane Buchanan | Barbara Hill |
| Gene Castillo | Beth Keane |
| Katty Chace | Valerie Kirshy |
| Diana Chaplin | Lenore Lobel |
| Robin Coutts | Rochelle Nemrow |
| Carter Bottjer Crawford | Mary Parker |
| Rosemary Cremens | Judy Price |
| Sally Currier | Pam Riffin |
| Beverly Foster | Kathleen Rousseau |
| Pam Fox | Katherine Strehle |
| Barbara Fullerton | Joan Suit |
| Susan Gray | Jean Thurston |
| Gwain Griffin | Katherine Wolfthal |
| Phyllis Halpern | |

Weston's Public Access TV Needs YOU!

Comcast Channel 9
Verizon Channels 41 & 45

Help us bring the stories and issues you care about to everyone in Weston.

We need your help to cover Town government and School Department meetings and events, tell stories of interest to the entire town and spread the word about your community group.

Call or email Gloria Cole, Executive Director of Weston Media Center, Inc.
at (781) 642-8508 or email westonstudio@comcast.net to volunteer or learn more.

OBSERVER CORPS

Jean Thurston

WESTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TUESDAY, OCT.13, 2009

1. JST/OL

There was discussion of the decision to postpone the vote on the Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library project. This will allow the designers to work further with the architects. There has not been enough time to develop the final design for the septic system. The November town meeting will have an article asking for so-called 'soft costs' from the CPC. They are meeting Monday, Oct. 19 to estimate the amount to be requested (could be \$250,000 - \$300,000) The estimators report on total costs is due on Friday. They believe it will be in the range we want it to be.

Mr. Hagerty said that we need to know what things will look like – the buildings and also Tavernside Park. He has questions on traffic, parking and noise. He likes the vendor. He reminded everyone that the town must also get approval of Historic New England, from whom we purchased the JST property. Andy Marvel of the JST/OT Committee, estimates that the project may take 1 ½ years.

2. Appoint ZBA Member

The Selectmen expressed their appreciation to all six residents who volunteered for this position. They are all qualified. After considerable discussion, Connie Gutierrez was appointed to fill a vacancy.

3. Revised Transfer Station Rules and Regulations

Bob Hoffman, DPW Director, presented the revised rules and regulations which were accepted by the Selectmen. They are available on the Town Web Site.

4. Designate Liaison to Ethic Commission per Ch. 28 of Acts of 2009

Lisa Kanakakis was appointed and will be required to take an exam.

5. Proposed Warrant Articles for November Special Town Meeting

Currently there are two school-related articles. One for Technical phase III for \$350,000 and one for Design funds for the High School Science Lab for \$600,000.

There will be a request for CPA funds for the JST/OL project.

There will be adjusts in the FY10 budget as a result of state aid cuts.

6. Preparation for 10/21 Meeting on Wireless Communication Master Plan

COMMUNICATION FROM THE STATE LEAGUE

On the next two pages you will find a communication from the Massachusetts State League, pertaining to the proposed expansion of voter-identification requirements at the polls. The LWVMA strongly opposes the reasons explained below.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.569, H.578, H.581, H.663, H.668, H.670, S.335 and S.360
Relating to Voter Identification Requirements
Shawna Reid, Executive Director

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts strongly urges you to oppose the above-noted bills related to expanding voter identification requirements at the election polls. These bills will make it more difficult to vote and have a chilling effect on voter participation.

The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy, and voting should be as easy and accessible as possible. Expansion of voter identification requirements beyond what is mandated by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) will suppress voter turnout, be burdensome to voters and election officials, and create barriers - especially for voters who are disabled, are members of a racial or ethnic minority, are new citizens, or are young voters. In addition, it has been frequently demonstrated that voter disenfranchisement is a greater problem than voting fraud.

The above-noted bills expand the requirements for showing identification to vote. These bills will require the voter to present various types of identification at each election. Amongst those noted were some form of photo ID, for example, a Massachusetts driver's license, a Massachusetts voter identification card, a United States passport, or an employer photo ID. Some offer various other non-photo documents. Many of the bills state that "Any Person desiring to vote who fails to present suitable identification shall not be permitted to vote." Some offer the possibility of a provisional ballot with a requirement to present a photo to the city or town clerk before that ballot will be accepted.

Photo ID requirements disproportionately impact those who are least likely to possess a current photo ID: the elderly, young people, people of color, rural voters, individuals with disabilities and frequent movers. Many Americans live in domiciles as roommates, spouses, or relative, or live on a college campus, where their name is not on the lease of on a utility bill. This means they do not have these items as forms of identification at the polls. At the polls, acceptance of an ID, particularly when IDs are not limited to a driver's license, passport, etc., would be dependent upon individual poll workers and election officials. Such tests and devices have historically resulted in discrimination and disenfranchisement of eligible voters.

In February 2007 the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University completed a study that examined the 2004 election and concluded that, in states requiring voters to present an ID at the polls, voters were 2.7 percent less likely to vote than in states where voters were merely required to state their names. This research is supported by a poll conducted by the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Laws in November 2006 that found as many as 11% of Americans – more than 21 million individuals, did not have a current government ID. These individual included 6 million elderly, 15% of voting-age citizens who earn less than \$25,000 a year, and 25% of voting age African Americans.

H.565 and H.587 are two similar bills , however, the League has not had an opportunity to subject them to our process for determining support or opposition. Once this has been completed, they will no doubt be added to the above list.

Under HAVA, states must, among other things, require all voters to provide their driver's license number or the last four digits of their social security number when registering to vote. HAVA also requires first-time voters who registered by mail to produce evidence of their identity before voting. The League believes these requirements for identification are adequate to prevent fraud.

League of Women Voters of Weston

MEMBERSHIP FORM 2009-2010

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization, which encourages informed and active participation in all levels of government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We serve the local community in many ways:

- Sponsor Candidates and Issues nights before elections
- Provide voter information and conduct voter-registration drives
- Encourage voter participation with banners and rides to the polls
- Study local, state and national issues and hold open meetings
- Act upon carefully considered positions by lobbying and circulating petitions
- Publish a "Know Your Town" booklet
- Train members to be active and involved citizens.

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. As a Weston member, you also belong to and receive publications from the State and National Leagues.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Check one: Renewal New Member

I enclose a check made payable to **The League of Women Voters of Weston*** for:

\$60 Individual Membership (covers required local dues to the State and National Leagues)

\$75 Family Membership (two individuals in the same household)

Name of second household member: _____

\$50 Basic Membership

\$_____ Additional Contribution (Any contributions above and beyond regular dues are greatly appreciated and assist our local league in providing more services and offsetting our operating expenses.)

\$_____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

.....
 \$_____ LWV Education Fund (Tax-deductible contribution made payable by separate check to the LWV Education Fund)

Return form to: Rochelle Nemrow, 61 Beaver Rd., Weston, MA 02493

Do you know a friend who might be interested in joining the League of Women Voters?

Name, address & phone _____

* It is the policy of the LWV of Weston that no resident shall be refused participation in the League because of inability to pay. If a hardship preventing payment of dues exists, please contact Katty Chace at 781-790-1087.