



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

December, 2008

No. 112

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

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

As the days darken down to the winter solstice, we look ahead to the winter holidays and the inauguration of our new president in January. Upcoming League events include a coffee hour in January with our state legislators, a League book group discussion in February and our competitive Civics Bee in March.

At the coffee hour on Saturday, January 31, Representative Alice Peisch and (hopefully) Senator Susan Fargo will join us to share their views on the state of the state, especially as it will be affected by the budget shortfall. We have asked Alice and Susan to discuss their priorities for the new legislative session.

Our book group will be discussing the Omnivore's Dilemma by Michael Pollan on February 11 at Rochelle Nemrow's at 61 Beaver Road. The book, which has been a best seller for months, is available at the library and in paperback.

On March 1, we will join in a friendly competition with our fellow Leagues in Wayland and Sudbury in a Civics Bee. Each town will field a team of nine (3 Middle Schoolers, 3 High Schoolers, 3 adults) to answer questions about our federal Constitution and Bill of Rights. The schools have signed on to participate and help select student team members, and one Weston resident has already stepped up to volunteer to help in any way, including as a team member. Kathie Strehle and Diana Chaplin are our liaisons for this activity.

Our League Website is up and running, thanks to the efforts of Beth Keane. It is linked to the town website, as

well as to the national and state Leagues. You can find all League positions, current events and archived Bulletins by checking it out at info@westonlww.org.

Our membership renewals are still lagging. Please renew now. If you're not sure whether you already have renewed, please email me at tackc@aol.com to check.

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2008 – MARCH 2009

January 13, Tuesday..... LWVW Open Meeting
9:15 A.M., 56 Bogle St., Weston, MA
(Kathy Rousseau, (781) 235-6559)

January 20, Tuesday.....Presidential Inauguration Day

January 31, Saturday..... LWVW Coffee Hour
11:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.
Community Room, Weston Public Library
Sen. Susan Fargo and
Rep. Alice Peisch

February 10, Tuesday.....LWVW Open Meeting
9:15 A.M., 3 Winter St., Weston, MA
(Barbara Fullerton, (781) 893-7440)

February 11, Wednesday..... LWVW Book Club:
7:30 P.M., 61 Beaver Rd.
(Rochelle Nemrow, (781) 790-1138)
Michael Pollan,
“The Omnivore’s Dilemma”

March 1, Sunday..... Civics Bee – sponsored by
Wayland Town Building Hearing Room
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 Robin Reisman, in Dover.

Minutes: Accepted as amended.

Treasurer's Report: We paid \$235 for our new web site (www.westonlww.org). We have only about \$2000 left in our treasury, so we must find some way to make some money.

Membership is smaller this year. The on-line bulletin may lead to people forget about us. We need to build our database in order to build our membership.

The Web site (www.westonlww.org) is up and running and linked to the town web site. For now the current bulletin will be e-mailed to members, but not put on the website. Past issues will be available there.

Coffee Hours:

We have one planned for Saturday, January 30. Katty will call Alice Peisch and Susan Fargo to see if they can join us then.

Civics Bee – Sunday, March 1. 2:00 –4:30 at the Wayland Town Building.

Questions will be designed for each age group (middle school, high school, and adult). They will be focused on the national government, since that is taught more in school.

Cheryl Maloney will help as a judge or to design questions.

There will be an award given; perhaps an on-going plaque to go to the winning town.

Diana Chaplin gave us a brief update on the Rte. 128 Corridor Committee.

A multi-modal transportation center is being proposed for the back of the Broken-Stone property, but Weston's restrictions could put most of the onus on Waltham for the land. Michael Harrity is the other Weston member of this committee. The MBTA is interested in this project because they are trying to cut out Weston stops on the rail line.

The Rail-Trail would come through this corridor. The rail trail has been leased by the Department of Recreation and Conservation whose head wants to make this happen.

League Book Club: We will meet at Rochelle Nemrow's on February 12 at 7:30 to discuss The Omnivore's Dilemma.

OUR LEAGUE WEBSITE IS UP AND RUNNING!

FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR LEAGUE AND ITS ACTIVITIES, GET VOTER INFORMATION,
READ PAST ISSUES OF OUR MONTHLY BULLETIN.
BE INFORMED ON OUR LOCAL POSITIONS.

<http://www.westonlww.org>

10TH ANNUAL ONLINE STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

The contest's theme this year is "Making Democracy Work: The Newly Elected President." The contest has begun! The deadline for submissions is March 6, 2008 at midnight.

The contest is open to all Massachusetts students in grades 4-12 and for young people 18-24 years old. All information about the contest including rules, prizes, and essay questions can be found on the League's website at: <http://www.lwvma.org/essaycontest09.shtml>

Winners of the grades 4-12 group will receive a US Savings bond, and the teacher or advisor of the winners will receive a classroom education grant. The winner in the 18-24 year old age group will receive a \$1,000 prize. The winners, their teachers, and those receiving Honorable Mention will be recognized at the awards event in Boston at the historic Faneuil Hall on Sunday, April 5, 2009, from 2:00- 4:00 p.m. Mark this date on your calendar!

LWVMA has faxed an announcement of this contest to all schools in the state and will be sending out bookmarks and flyers to libraries across the Commonwealth. Please encourage your local schools to share the information with social studies, English and computer teachers, as well as school librarians.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

...People of Wayland, Sudbury and Weston, of all ages



You can become a better citizen, make your town proud and make our democracy stronger – all in one exciting new event. Students, teachers and other adults are invited to participate in the

Inter-town Civics Bee



Sponsored by the League of Women Voters
Sunday, March 1, 2009 • 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.
Wayland Town Building, Hearing Room

The Event: Town teams will compete to answer fundamental questions on civics, including the U.S. Constitution, the federal government, and American history. The team with the most correct answers will bring home the **League of Women Voters' Civics Trophy** for their town to hold during this year.

The Teams: Each town team will consist of 9 people: 3 middle school students, 3 high school students, and 3 adults who will compete against the other towns, one age group at a time. The players may reach out to other age groups on their team using a limited number of "lifelines." Group coaching sessions and other ways to prepare for the event will be provided by the Leagues.

The Audience: The public is invited to be present – family, friends, legislators, everyone! We also anticipate that the event will be broadcast live on WayCAM with later re-broadcasts.

How might you participate?

You could be a player on a team.

You could help create questions or be one of the coaches for your town's team.

You could help with publicity or with hospitality.

You could contribute refreshments or serve them.

You could donate gifts for contestants.

You could donate the trophy or its engraving, or flowers or name cards for the event.

Interested? Contact one of the people listed below for more information or to offer to get involved.

Sudbury Contact: Bonnie Glass 978-460-1458 robertaglass@comcast.net	Wayland Contact Sandy Coy 508-653-6014 14 Hawthorne Rd., Wayland sandycoy@verizon.net	Weston Contact: Diana Chaplin 781-893-6288 Diana@greatestate.com
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SAVE THE DATE!
Monday, Dec.29, 7:30-9:00 P.M.

Parmenter Community Health Care and The Sudbury League of Women Voters are teaming up to host a Health Care Community Discussion in response to the Obama-Biden Transition team's efforts to harness the energy and ideas of residents across America.

All are invited to join in the conversation to be held on Monday, December 29 from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. in the Auditorium at the Parmenter agency offices located at 266 Cochituate Road (Route 27) in Wayland.

"Providing quality affordable health care for all Americans is one of my top priorities for this country because our long-term fiscal prospects will have a hard time improving as long as skyrocketing health care costs are holding us all down," said President-Elect Obama. "Yet in order for us to reform our health care system, we must first begin reforming how government communicates with the American people. These Health Care Community Discussions are a great way for the American people to have a direct say in our health care reform efforts and I encourage Americans to take part if they are able. I am looking forward hearing back from you and from Senator Daschle in the coming weeks."

Rev. Judy Deutsch will serve as the moderator, using a moderator's kit and feedback forms provided by the Transition Team.

Light refreshments will be served.

OBSERVER CORPS

Robin Peakes Coutts

Some time ago we attended a ZBA hearing for a property where the Owner requested variances to be able to build a new house on an especially narrow lot...they already had permission to tear down the old house and wanted to rebuild further back on the lot so as to locate the new septic system in front on the house.

The Neighbor was concerned that the new house, further back on the lot, would ruin his viewscape. A Board member suggested that the Owner/Applicant might purchase some evergreen shrubs to plant on the neighbors' land so as to soften the impact of changes being made. Both parties agreed and the Board agreed to allow the Variances. At that time there was

not yet a precise definition of “structure” in our Bylaws.

The house was built, according to plan, but air conditioning units were added within the agreed setback because they were not yet defined as a “structure”. The noise and further encroachment bothered the Neighbor.

Some time later the Applicant sold the house to new owners who needed a Generator. During the interim the Town had refined the definition of “structure” to include Generators and air conditioners but by now only the Generator would require a variance. The New Owner appeared before the Planning Board to explain the need for a generator and why it would have to be within the sideline setback. Once again the Neighbor appeared, this time further concerned

because they had been obliged to look down onto an air conditioner and also listen to it...would there also be a huge generator nearby?

The Planning Board and two parties discussed various options at length but finally the Planning Board offered to do a Site Visit the following morning. They did so and it was agreed that the Generator could be sized smaller, could have its noise muffled, could be enclosed within a fence, around which would be sufficient plants to conceal the view and reduce noise.

Last week a variance was granted to the new owners by the ZBA, a variance conditioned per requirements as agreed between the Planning Board, the Applicant, and the Neighbor.

Membership Note

Thanks to the following people who have renewed their LWVW memberships for this fiscal year. If your name isn't on this list but you think you have renewed, check your records and contact Rochelle Nemrow, at 781-790-1138. If you haven't yet renewed, please take a moment to do so now.

Cynthia Berg
Carol Berman
Elizabeth Bjorkman
Jane Buchanan
Gene Castillo
Katty Chace
Robin Coutts
Carter Bottjer Crawford
Rosemary Cremens
Polly Dickson
Jean Emans
Pamela Foster
Pam Fox

Barbara Fullerton
Mary Gregory
Phyllis Halpern
Christie Hedges
Barbara Hill
Beth Keane
Valerie Kirshy
Lenore Lobel
Patricia Mohiuddin
Rochelle Nemrow
Candy Paquin
Mary Parker
Joan Parrish

Judy Price
Robin Reisman
Elise Rockart
Kathleen Rousseau
Patricia Shotwell
Katherine Smith
Katherine Strehle
Joan Suit
Jean Thurston
Jenny Tulloss
Ingeborg Uhlir
Katherine Wolfthal