



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

September, 2009

No. 119

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

League of Women Voters of Weston

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781-891-1087

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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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VOTER INFORMATION

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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 shorten and the weather cools, we find ourselves somewhat unexpectedly in the midst of another political season, as we embark on the election of a Massachusetts senator to replace Ted Kennedy. The primary is scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, and the election comes six weeks later, on January 19. Candidates are stepping forward to take advantage of this unusual situation, where they don't risk their current seats to run in the off-season. In addition - hot off the presses - we have just learned that the Senate has approved the appointing of an interim senator to fill Kennedy's seat. And just around the corner, the race for the governor's office next fall is shaping up as candidates jockey for position and consider whether it would be in their best interest to run in a different party.

Locally, a fall Town Meeting has been scheduled for Monday, November 30. The primary focus of this session will be consideration of funding design fees for the transformation of the Josiah Smith Tavern into a modern restaurant and meeting place for Weston residents. There has been spirited discussion for several months about whether this step would be a good thing for the town or not, including a fairly complicated process of attaining the proper authorization to serve liquor in town.

Our League year starts off with formation of a study group to look into the process and communication of local town government. The town has made huge strides in the last few years of attempting to keep townspeople informed about the workings of town government. The town website, the process that led to the new DPW building

and the discussions that have accompanied the adoption of a process to remove the contaminated soil on the Case Estates land are all examples of how well things can work when all parties are kept informed and included. See Barbara Hill's article elsewhere in this Bulletin.

The next meeting of our League book club is scheduled for Wednesday, October 21 at 7:30 at Kathy Rousseau's on Bogle Street. Our book is Jeffrey Toobin's *The Nine*, a riveting account of the current members of the Supreme Court. Toobin mixes descriptions of the jurists' judicial philosophies with recountings of their personal habits and personalities, to create quite a riveting portrait. We encourage you to read the book and join us for a stimulating discussion.

The board has been trying to organize a local fundraiser to bolster our financial reserves. We would like to have a fascinating speaker to provide the focus at an evening event in a private home. If you have any ideas or connections to local movers and shakers, please

contact me to pass along your suggestions.

The Massachusetts League voted at their convention in June to conduct two re-studies of topics that it has studied in the past, but which bear some re-examination due to changing circumstances: transportation and home rule. If you would like to get involved in these re-studies, the state League is always looking for new members of their study committees. If you'd like to get involved in a more local context, you could help present the material gathered by the state study committee to local leagues members.

Membership renewal forms went out in our June Bulletin, and you will find one in this Bulletin as well. We encourage you to take this opportunity to send in your renewal if you forgot to do it then. Please call me for details or send Rochelle Nemrow (61 Beaver Road) a check to re-up. We need you all to keep our membership vibrant.

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.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2009

| | |
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| September 27, Sunday..... 3:00 P.M., Weston Public Library (see announcement on page 6 of this Bulletin) | Weston Carbon Crunch Launch Party |
| October 14, Wednesday..... 9:15 A.M. , 155 Conant Rd (Katherine Wolfthal, 781-891-9549) | LWVW Board Meeting |
| 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. – 12:00 P.M. Location TBA | LWVW Coffee Hour Josiah Smith Tavern Project |
| November 30, Monday..... 7:30 P.M. – Weston High School | Special Town Meeting |
| December 8, Tuesday..... | U.S. Senatorial Primary |
| January 19, 2010, Tuesday..... | U.S. Senatorial Election |

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>

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 3rd Middlesex District

The Honorable Susan Fargo
(617)722-1572
State House, Room 504
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: sfargo@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

Kathleen Rousseau

The September meeting was held on September 15 at the home of Robin Coutts.

Treasurer's Report: We ended last year with about \$500 in the bank. With dues coming in, we now have close to \$1000. Our expenses are not very large, but we must pay the PMPs to State and National. How much money do we need in the bank? We do need some money so that we can take action if we feel that it is needed.

Fundraiser: We are planning to hold a fund-raising party with an exciting speaker sometime this year. So far the speakers whom we have contacted are all booked. A number of suggestions were made for new people to contact in hopes of having this party at the end of January. Any suggestions from our members would be welcome.

Civics Bee: This event (held in coordination with the Wayland and Sudbury Leagues) was very popular last year. Weston is in charge of the arrangements this year because our team won last year. It will probably be held at the Amy Potter Center in March. Katty would like to include questions on state government in addition to those on the constitution and federal government. We discussed whether we would be able to get electronic equipment so that the audience could participate in the quiz.

LWV Phonathon: Each year this is held in the fall. Our league would get a portion of the money raised by any of our members who took part in the phonathon. We also get a share of any money contributed by residents of Weston. Only League members or previous donors are called.

Local Study: We proposed a local study this year to look at town government and, in particular, its transparency. It was suggested that we might want to collect information comparing elected vs. appointed boards and looking at the longevity of office-holders. First we would like to form a study

committee of interested members who can then refine the focus of the study.

State Studies: LWVMA has state studies on Transportation and Home Rule. We do not have committees to deal with these right now, but will keep up-to-date on the information provided by the state league.

Book Group: Members of the League will be discussing the book *The Nine: Inside the secret world of the Supreme Court* by Jeffrey Toobin. This discussion is open to everyone. The meeting will be held on October 21 at 7:30 at the home of «GreetingLine».

Miscellaneous:

The Weston Climate Group is holding a “Carbon Crunch Challenge” this month. Participants will compare last year’s electric bill with this year’s to see who has saved the most electricity.

There will be a special Town Meeting this fall at which construction funds for the Josiah Smith Tavern will be up for a vote.

Barbara Fullerton was interested in doing some education about Lyme disease since it is so prevalent in this area.

Barbara will also look into what is being done at the fields near the Country School.



CIVICS BEE
Katty Chace

After the success of last year's Civics Bee in Wayland, the Bee is moving to Weston this year. As the winner of the friendly competition between Wayland, Sudbury and Weston, we will host this year's event, probably in the Amy Potter Center at Weston Middle School. Planning begins with a meeting on Wednesday, September 23. We will chose a date

in late winter and the parameters of subject matter. Last year focused on the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Amendments. This year we might expand to include Massachusetts state government in recognition of the upcoming gubernatorial election next fall. We'd love to have your help in planning this event. Call me at 781-891-1087 if you'd like to join us.





JOIN WESTON'S FIRST CARBON CRUNCH CHALLENGE!

The Weston Climate Group hopes to engage you in our first Carbon Crunch, a **friendly two month competition among families** to reduce electricity use and shrink our NSTAR bills.

Our contest will encourage good habits and good clean fun, based on models used nationwide. We were inspired by the successful contest among the Weston schools this past year.

Our challenge will **measure October and November reductions in kilowatt hours** compared to last year. (Every NSTAR bill gives you a history of your kilowatt consumption for a year.) Other categories will be winners too.

We'll have a **launch party & workshop** September 27 and a **final awards party** on December 13. Both events are at the Library on Sunday afternoons at 3PM.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT?

Individual families or teams may join in. If you can enlist three or four families they become a team and **we publicize your group** on our web site and in all materials we may use.

There is **no registration fee**, but if you would like to sponsor our effort, \$25 will win you recognition in our materials and on our web site. For \$50 we will also **exhibit your materials** at our two parties.

We ask you to help us recruit families for this unique event. May we attend your next meeting to ignite interest and answer questions? **Other issues?** Email Martie Fiske: at fiskem@verizon.net or Rudy Ruggles at rudyruggles3@gmail.com.

Learn more and register at westonclimategroup.org before September 27.

JOSIAH SMITH TAVERN AND OLD LIBRARY RENOVATION PROJECT COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Barbara Hill

(Selectmen's appointee to CPC for recreational interests)



Last year Town Meeting approved spending from the Community Preservation fund in the amount of \$750,000 requested by the Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library committee for architectural fees to evaluate and implement (if appropriate) the idea to renovate the Old Library as a Historical Center (Historical Society, Historical Commission and Weston Archives) on the lower level and as a new home on the main level for the Women's Community League, to restore the Tavern creating a 150 seat restaurant (175 maximum for functions) and to relocate and reconstruct Tavernside Playground in the park next to Town Hall. The project is nearing the end of the predevelopment phase.

The Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library Committee has been working hard, meeting with community groups and the Women's Community League to address the concerns raised at last year's Town Meeting and to make this proposal a reality. In addition the Committee has been negotiating with a restaurateur on the terms of their lease and occupancy. Much progress has been made. The Committee is negotiating with the Webber Restaurant Group – which successfully operates both Scarlett Oaks in Hingham and Gibbet Hill in Groton. From the submissions received, the

Webber Restaurant Group was the Committee's top choice; at both of their other restaurants, like the vision for the Tavern, there is great food at reasonable prices, housed in restored historical buildings. The restaurateur anticipates doing tastings at couple of locations to be determined.

Next month the Committee will bring its request for construction funding to the Community Preservation Committee. If CPC approval is obtained, then the matter goes to Town Meeting for a vote on whether to approve the construction funding. At Special Town Meeting on November 30, 2009, the Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library Committee hopes to receive approval from Town Meeting for the final construction monies to begin renovation of the two buildings. Construction documents are nearly complete, and approvals are expected to be in place for an early 2010 construction start if Weston voters approve construction financing. Project completion is scheduled for 2011.

[Tracey Lembo, CPC Administrator, and Andy Marvel, JST/OL Committee member contributed to this article.]

PEARLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER DEDICATION

Lenore Zug Lobel

Chair, Weston Hurricane Katrina Committee

What is a “gully washer”?
What is a “frog strangler”?

What is the value of a stunning new community center in Pearlington, Mississippi, a small town devastated by Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005?



The new Pearlington Community Center

Thanks to so many of you, I can answer all three questions.

An estimated 200 people attended the dedication of the new Pearlington community center on August 29, 2009. The crowd included residents, volunteers from across the country, the press, and State and County officials. The weather was spectacular. Rocky Pullman, the President of the Hancock County Board of Supervisors, welcomed us. After the invocation, the Pledge of Allegiance and a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem, we heard from State elected officials and from Howard Pape and Jack Horn, two founders of the Building Goodness Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia who spent the last four years overseeing the construction of the community center.

Paula Buhr, a nurse from Houston, Texas, spoke of her wrenching experience as one of the first responders to reach Pearlington in 2005; well in



From left: Karen and Howard Pape, Lenore Lobel and Jack Horn preside over the cutting of a cake thanking the volunteers who helped make the Community Center a reality.

advance of the National Guard, she arrived by helicopter with water and medicine and a stethoscope and gun in her backpack.



Ada Pallodes, the new administrator of the Community Center, with her husband Sunny and Howard Pape.

I spoke on behalf of the Town of Weston and the countless volunteers who gave so generously in terms of time and financial support. I was so proud to present a magnificent quilt made by a fifth grade Weston Girl Scout Troop under the able direction of Karen Ott. The quilt will be

prominently displayed on a central wall of the community center as will a plaque thanking the Building Goodness Foundation and the Town of Weston.



Lenore Lobel, left, and Rocky Pullman present the quilt made by a fifth-grade Weston girl scout troop.

The good cheer and communal pride culminated in a “ribbon joining ceremony”, symbolizing the joining of the many volunteers and residents who made the community center a reality.



The ribbon-joining ceremony

There already have been four weddings and scores of birthday parties and family gatherings, as well as numerous meetings, at the community

center. The center is booked through March 2010.



Lenore Lobel, left, with Nancy Ratliffe, a Wellesley graduate who lives in Mississippi.



From left: Dallas Trammell, a Pearlington resident who has been involved with the Community Center from the outset, Lenore Lobel and Marc Landy of Weston.

Thank you all for your interest and support over the past four years. The community center is a fabulous success... and by the way, a gully washer is a “really heavy rain that fills a ditch (gully) and overflows” while a frog strangler is an “even heavier rain, so much so that it could even drown a frog”.

Photos by Karen Pape and Nancy Ratliffe



**OPEN GOVERNMENT
LOCAL STUDY STARTING**

Barbara Hill

At our Annual Meeting last Spring, the League of Women Voters of Weston voted to commence a local study reviewing the current practices of town governmental bodies, the Open Meeting Law requirements, practices of other governmental organizations and other options that may promote the ideals of representative, accountable and responsive government. Ultimately we hope that the consensus reached from this Study will include some recommendations about protocols Weston Town governmental organizations may wish to adopt to promote these ideals.

Now that Fall is on our doorstep, it is time to begin! We are looking for a few good women (and men) to help organize, conduct and coordinate this local study. Your participation can be big or small. This is an excellent opportunity for exposure to how government works in Weston – the good and the “needs improvement” – and to help figure out what the “improvement” might look like. Rather than complain about the status quo, come be part of the solution. If you like the way some departments work, come help spread that “good” to other departments too.

As background, a few words on what a League Study means, and what it entails: The League of Women Voters is an organization with a two-fold mission: education and advocacy. The League is

non-partisan – advocacy takes place only on issues, not candidates. Even more, the League only advocates on behalf of adopted positions (at the national, state or local level). Positions are adopted only after study of an issue, presentation of the information to groups who then form a “consensus.” The consensus from each “unit meeting” is added to form a broad consensus which is presented first to the Board, and, if adopted there, to the membership at the next annual meeting for adoption. Only if a position is adopted by both the Board, and then the League membership, is the League thereafter permitted to advocate implementing that position.

Examples of our advocacy on a local level include support of the Transfer Station, combining a number of town departments into the Department of Public Works, and even the formation of the Weston Community Children’s Association.

The proposed current local study is an excellent opportunity to understand Weston’s Town Government, to find your way around town departments and to navigate between them. Time commitment can be as much or little as you can manage. It is a great way to get to know a group of insightful, thinking, community-minded residents and to get involved with the League. Please contact Katty Chace to join the Study Committee at tackc@aol.com or 781-891-1087.



Planned Parenthood Needs Volunteers!

Waiting Room Volunteer opportunity

The Waiting Room Volunteer offers a warm greeting to patients entering the Boston Health Center for appointments, walk-in services, pill pick-ups, or other services. The Waiting Room Volunteer provides assistance to reception by greeting incoming patients, noting name and time of arrival. The Waiting Room Volunteer serves as a liaison between patients and health center staff, as well as patients and companions in the waiting room. Waiting Room Volunteers are available to answer questions from patients and patient companions, or refer to appropriate staff when necessary. The Waiting Room Volunteer maintains cleanliness of the waiting room, ensuring a comfortable environment for patients and patient companions.

Scheduling

PPLM requests a minimum of one shift weekly. Shifts are 7:30 – 11:00 am and 10:30 – 2pm, Tuesdays through Saturdays. A minimum of a six-month commitment is preferred, with flexibility for vacations, prior commitments, etc.

For more information, contact:

Elizabeth Merritt

Volunteer Program Manager

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

1055 Commonwealth Avenue

Boston, MA 02215

Phone: 617.616.1645

Fax: 617.616.1665

Dear members and friends,

Please don't forget to renew your membership to the Weston League of Women voters. Remember that it is only through your continued support that our League can survive and flourish.

Your membership does not require any of your time or work. However, we welcome and encourage you to attend our monthly board meetings and Saturday coffee hours, and to contribute to our monthly newsletter. Any activity or event you participate in will be an even greater benefit to the League and will enrich your experience as a member and a citizen.

Please complete and return the attached membership form with your check made payable to the League of Women Voters of Weston.

Thank you for your support.

Rochelle Nemrow
Membership Chair

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.