



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

April, 2011

No. 136

OPENING MESSAGE

Robin Reisman

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

Longingly awaited, spring is here. And it is good; for all but – alas! the Red Sox – about whom the less said, the better. (Well, since I wrote that sentence, Becket has won another game. Maybe there’s still hope.)

The annual Civics Bee has come and gone for a third year – look for the report on that contest further along in this bulletin. It seems that the Civics Bee is catching on in other places, as other Leagues near and far have gotten wind of our annual competition with Wayland and Sudbury and clamor to learn more about the Bees so they can initiate them in their own communities.

Town Meeting looms, and there will be a Saturday coffee hour, on April 30, to allow presenters to cover several of the important articles to be brought before the voters. There was already an April Saturday coffee hour at the High School on the 9th showcasing the proposal for the new science labs for the high school and the Field School proposal; unfortunately, the April 9th coffee hour was quite poorly attended. It requires a certain amount of commitment and sacrifice on the part of League Board members to host the Saturday coffee hours, and the LWV Board believes it is part of its fundamental mission to provide fora for educating and informing voters about local issues which they must decide. We have been offering the Saturday coffee hours for a number of years now, and Town leaders seem to appreciate the opportunity for face-to-face balanced communication that the League strives to make available. However, it is disappointing and discouraging when turnout is almost inevitably, predictably very low. The League would love nothing more than a star turn by the voting public at the April 30th coffee hour. Articles to be discussed will include the Affordable Housing Trust and the so-called “Stretch Code”, two topics covered in the March LWV bulletin.

Even though Weston's planned year-long 300th anniversary (2013) is over a year away, the Weston300 Committee in charge of planning and coordinating events is in place, and various organizations in town are already donning their thinking caps as they imagine how they might participate, the League of Women Voters being

no exception. Ideas and suggestions would be welcomed for an appropriate and meaningful LWV contribution to the celebration.

p.s. The Red Sox just won **another** game – Pennant Fever Grips the Hub!

CALENDAR APRIL – MAY 2011

April 16-April 24.....	Weston Public Schools Spring Vacation
April 30, Saturday..... 11:00a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Community Room, Weston Public Library	LWVW Coffee Hour Town Meeting warrant articles
May 2, Monday..... 7:30 p.m., Weston Town Hall Auditorium	Budget Hearing
May 7, Saturday..... 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Weston Town Hall Auditorium	Town Elections
May 9, Monday..... 7:30 p.m. Weston High School Auditorium	Annual Town Meeting
May 11, Wednesday..... 7:30 p.m., Weston High School Auditorium	Town Meeting 2 nd night (if necessary)
May 20-21, Friday and Saturday..... The Publick House, Sturbridge, MA	LWVMA Convention
May 30, Monday.....	Memorial Day

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 Scott Brown
2400 JFK Building
55 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203
(617)565-3170
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-4543
No e-mail address currently available
- 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)722-2320
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 26
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: alice.peisch@mahouse.gov

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Kathleen Rousseau

The March meeting was held at the home of Barbara Flannery.

Kathie Strehle presented the treasurer's report. We have a little over \$2000 in our account thanks to lower expenses and the advertising in this bulletin. The budget for next year has very few changes. More money must be put into the budget for the Civics Bee.

The presentation at the Coffee Hour in the High School was very informative. The plans for an addition to the High School for new science laboratories were shown, with descriptions of their expected uses.

One more coffee hour will be held on April 30 to discuss an affordable housing trust and the "stretch code" which has to do with energy efficiency. Both issues will come up at Town Meeting. Pam Fox has asked to discuss CPA funds for the old library at this meeting.

Rochelle suggested that we might want to sponsor an essay contest for parents on how to raise civically aware children. This could be done in conjunction with the Civics Bee, and perhaps include our neighboring towns.

The Civics Bee went very well again this year. It was held in Sudbury, and Sudbury won. The questions were somewhat harder this year. Past experience showed that the students knew more than had originally been expected. We have mixed child/adult teams to have a more intergenerational interaction.

There was a discussion of methods for citizens to get information about town activities. Wayland has an e-mail newsletter that goes out each week to residents who subscribe to it. We now have "the Grapevine" which was started for a similar purpose.

The "Day on the Hill" is on April 13 at the State House.

The State Convention is in Sturbridge on May 20 and 21.

There was a discussion of possible speakers for our Annual Meeting. The time will be decided on when we know when a speaker is available.

Robin Coutts spoke a little about Weston 300. All the organizations in town will be taking part in

some way. Katty suggested that we could have a registration drive. It has been found that registering students who will turn 18 at the High School in the fall works well.

LWVW COFFEE HOUR
Saturday, April 30, 11:00 A.M.

Our next Coffee Hour will take place on Saturday, April 30 at 11:00 at the library and will feature discussion of three important issues coming up for a vote at the Town Meeting on Monday, May 9th. The warrant articles include the creation of a Weston Affordable Housing Trust, which would have an ability to move quickly when properties become available, a proposed "Stretch Energy Code", which would designate Weston as a Massachusetts "Green Community", and the approval of \$850,000 in Community Preservation Act Funds for the restoration of the exterior of the Old Library, including roof and window repair. Proponents of the articles will be available to describe the proposals and answer questions.

The League of Women Voters of Weston
wishes to extend sincere thanks to the following Friends
and Sponsors who have generously given their support to our work.

**Coldwell Banker Residential
Brokerage**
781-894-5555
426 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

**Daryl Christopher Salon
and Day Spa**
781 890 9211
at HealthPoint
84o Winter Street, Waltham, MA

Florentine Frames
781 647 1249
478 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

The Gift Gallery
781 894 1633
464 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

Ogilvie's
781 894 1265
39 Warren Avenue, Weston, MA

Omni Foods Supermarkets
781 894 0675
21 Center Street, Weston, MA

Weston Travel Service
781 891 9110
483 Boston Post Road, Weston, MA

MASSACHUSETTS STATE LWV CONVENTION

The Massachusetts State League will hold its biennial Convention on Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21 at the Publick House in Sturbridge. Decisions will be made about the League's program for the next two years, including its legislative priorities, approval of a budget, and election of a new state board. Members may attend as delegates or observers for either day or both days. If you're interested, call Katty Chace at 781-891-1087.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A Vote Against the Stormwater Bylaw

Any time government proposes to regulate a new part of our lives, we should ask **A)** is there a need for it and **B)** is the solution worse than the problem?

The Need: Controlling Mother Nature?

Governments tend to accumulate things to manage and many of them are legitimate – schools, roads, public safety, etc. But, rain and land pre-date government. For thousands of years, Mother Nature and gravity have managed rainwater without the need for government micro-managing how residents account for the rainwater that lands on or flows onto their property. If you look at a satellite view of Weston (just go to Google Maps on your computer), you'll see a town full of natural land. Most of the rain that falls on Weston already hits something green with no help from man. So, why are we proposing a bureaucracy of rules and fees to manage rain falling on the small percentage of Weston that is non-natural? What problem are we *really* trying to solve here, and what price are we being asked to pay for it?

You might ask: *But, what about the pictures on the town website showing a homeowner flooding problem?* Sure, let's talk about that.

Have there been instances where Neighbor A did something that inadvertently caused Neighbor B problems during a heavy rain storm? I'm sure there are. And, it is usually the case that Neighbor A takes responsibility in order to fix any damage. The same logic applies if Neighbor A's child hits a baseball through Neighbor B's window. The two parties work it out - all without town government involved. I doubt anyone would support a Bylaw requiring a permit for a Dad to play ball with his child in his own yard and making him fill out a form telling a town board which sports he will be playing and whether he

understands the danger of hitting a ball into his neighbor's property.

Sound silly? How is the SWPA proposal really different? The Stormwater Bylaw seeks to codify a permanent oversight of property that has for hundreds of years been a private affair. Do we really need town government doing this for us at the cost of a permanent new employee that we all pay for?

The Means: Requiring All of Us to Learn the Rules

Let's assume we want to cede our rights to manage our property to the SWPA. What form should that take? Should the focus be on the most obvious problem areas or should the mandate be so broad that virtually any activity could fall under its purview? Most people would instinctively say "Focus on the problem. 99% of what people do on their own property is harmless and they should not have to be concerned about which forms to fill out or whether they have read the rules and regulations to avoid being fined." That would be a reasonable approach. But, that is not what the proposed Bylaw does. It seeks to measure all activities and fit them into 3 baskets of Major/Minor/No-Permit.

OK, well at least they allow for a No-Permit concept, right? Well, yes, but the very definition means you have to know what the triggers are to avoid running afoul of the SWPA. Consider this wording: "...no permit shall be required by the SWPA provided that erosion control measures are used and the activity will not result in an increased amount of stormwater runoff or pollutants flowing from a parcel of land and entering a traveled way or adjacent properties." Frankly, one could drive a dump truck full of loam through the loophole of that wording favoring the regulators.

The Enforcement: More government power.

If you had attended the various town meetings held by the SWPA proponents, you would have seen a group of well-intentioned people who believe they are proposing something that is needed. However, the answers to many "what happens if" questions should be concerning to average citizens. Such questions are inevitable with something as imprecise as rain falling on myriad types of property (flat, hilly, rocky, grassy, etc.). The answers from the SWPA sponsors were often of the form "even though the bylaw says XYZ, we would obviously work with you because the *intention is to be reasonable.*"

Think about that. The Bylaw is written to assume residents are doing the wrong thing, and that the SWPA will discern the true risk and *let you off the hook* if they deem your activity harmless.

That may be ok if the current board is peopled with reasonable folks. But this Bylaw will still be around long after the current board is retired. What happens in the future when potentially *unreasonable* people take control of the SWPA and bring Weston's construction and home renovation activity to a halt because the Bylaw is written to favor the SWPA's interpretation of the rules?

All it would take to sully Weston's reputation as a premier property-friendly community would be a hyperactive local bureaucracy that imposes its will through aggressive interpretation of Bylaws never *intended* to be administered so strictly. This proposed Bylaw is a permanent and powerful transfer of authority from the average homeowner to the Town. Residents should be very wary of the unintended consequences both now and in the future.

BRUCE MUNROE

Messages from the Town

Please note that most Town and School Departments have new telephone numbers. The new numbers are posted on the Town's website at www.weston.org.

The Town Moderator, Wendy Spector, has requested publication of the announcements on the following pages.

COLDWELL BANKER RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE
IS PROUD TO SUPPORT
THE FINE WORK OF
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS



RESIDENTIAL BROKERAGE

CONSISTENTLY
WESTON'S #1 REAL ESTATE COMPANY

WWW.NEWENGLANDMOVES.COM

(781) 894-5555 · 426 BOSTON POST ROAD · WESTON, MA 02493

©2009 Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. Coldwell Banker is a registered trademark licensed to Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. An Equal Opportunity Employer. Equal Housing Opportunity. Owned and operated by NRT, LLC

AFFORDABLE AND ENERGY EFFICIENT HOUSING FOR WESTON

By Keith B. Gross, RA

Weston is leading the way in affordable housing with the recent completion of a two-family home at 23-25 Pine Street. Designed by Keith Gross, Architect, a Weston resident and director on the board of Weston Affordable Housing Foundation, Inc. (WAHFI), the house melds traditional New England design with the latest in energy-conservation and renewable-energy systems.



The house at 23-25 Pine Street

Perched on a rise to take advantage of direct southern exposure, the house provides separate formal facades for each of the two units, one facing the street and the other facing to the south. The southern orientation allows for generous views across the private yard and also for optimum gain for active solar hot water collectors and for innovative passive solar water windows. The active solar collectors feed into a 120 gallon hot water tank that holds the preheated water until called for by the tenants. Approximately 75% of the hot water will be provided by the solar system. The passive solar water windows are prototypes being developed by the R&D department of Hunter Douglas, the window treatment company. Based in Natick and headed by Weston resident Wendell Colson, the R&D department has developed an innovative

system that allows a large amount of water to be suspended between layers of specially coated glass with a nano-gel that is totally transparent. The suspended water absorbs the sun's energy and holds it for release to the interior of the home when there is a need for heating. To prevent overheating and to provide privacy, the windows have an automatic roller shade system on the outside that prevents sun from striking the windows when down and providing privacy when needed. These windows will be monitored for the first year to confirm their heating contribution to the homes.



Transparent Passive Water Windows, with shades down.

These homes also excel in their tight construction and the levels and types of insulation used to keep the heat or cool inside. Spray foam insulation has been used in the walls, ceilings and on the basement walls to make an air-tight cocoon that surrounds the living spaces. The foam and inner layers of applied board foam block virtually all air from infiltrating into the interior, providing draft free spaces. With the levels of insulation, these homes are 42% more energy efficient than required by the building code. The double hung windows in the house are also extremely efficient, sporting triple glazing for reduced heat loss. Even the basement windows are triple glazed as the basement space is fully usable as additional living space. To make sure

the air inside is fresh and healthy, an air to air heat exchanger is built into each unit so that a steady supply of fresh air is brought in. As it enters the heat exchanger, it transfers 85% of its heat energy (or its cool energy in the summer) from the outgoing air to the incoming air which then is heated (or cooled) before delivery to all the rooms.



Passive Water Windows with shades up.

The combination of all these energy saving features and high quality construction will mean that the utility bills for the tenants will be quite low and the level of comfort inside the homes

will be exceptionally high. Keeping the costs low is important as part of WAHFI's mission to provide affordable housing. These units and the 1.85 acres they are situated on have a permanent deed restriction that they will only be rented to qualified low-income families that meet very strict income guidelines established by the Mass Department of Housing and Community Development. Because of these restrictions, these houses count toward the affordable housing inventory that the State considers in the requirement to have 10% of the housing considered affordable in order to exempt communities from the 40B law. WAHFI has held a lottery for qualifying applicants that are interested in renting these units. Because of the need we demonstrated for local low income families, one of the units was given local preference status, so families that either live in Weston, are employed in Weston, or are participants in the Weston Metco program were in the lottery for one of the units. Successful winners from the lottery should be calling these units home by this summer.

Anyone interested in a tour of the property can do so by contacting Keith Gross at 781-894-6639 or his email kbgrossra@hdsarchitecture.com



Community Preservation Committee Update
By Barbara Hill
(Community Preservation Committee Member)

To recap, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) evaluates proposals submitted by Town boards and committees or community groups for use of funds that the Town receives pursuant to Article 31 of the Town By-Laws and the state Community Preservation Act (CPA). In 2001, Weston adopted the CPA, including a property tax surcharge of 3% (with certain exceptions), and has benefited by the State matching a portion of the local receipts.

Pursuant to the CPA legislation, a community must spend, or set aside for future spending, a minimum of 10% of annual CPA receipts on open space (excluding recreational purposes), historic preservation, and community housing. The remaining 70% of funds may be allocated to any one or a combination of the three main uses, including public recreational purposes, at the discretion of the CPC and subject to the approval of Town meeting.

In October 2010, Weston received its ninth disbursement from the State's matching Community Preservation Trust Fund. Weston's total State match was \$470,359, or approximately 30% of the reported CPC surcharge Weston had collected from property tax surcharges. Due to increased participation in the program across Massachusetts and reduced real estate activity (the program is funded through deed recording fees), this was the third time in program history that the State did not match our local collections at the 100% level. From the program's inception through the end of FY10, the Town collected (i) nearly \$8.7 million in CPA revenue from the State, (ii) over \$11.6 million in CPA revenue locally from surcharge collections and (iii) earned over \$2.2 million in investment income on these receipts.

In July 2010, An Act to Sustain Community Development, a bill which, among other things, seeks to raise the guaranteed minimum State match from 5% to 75%, received a favorable recommendation from the Massachusetts House Ways and Means Committee. The bill was re-filed

in February 2011 and, given its strong support in the House, supporters are optimistic that it will pass in the current legislative session. In addition, the bill, if adopted, would amend certain provisions of the CPA, including permitting renovation of recreational land whether or not such recreational land was acquired by the town with CPA funds (see chart below).

Total Weston CPA fund revenues available for FY12 are projected to be \$10,874,518 and are comprised of the following: 1) \$8,758,311 prior year balance, 2) \$1,662,925 local property surcharge, 3) \$413,869 state match, and 4) \$39,412 investment income.

The deadline for submission of applications for CPA funding in FY12 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012) was January 10, 2011. The CPC met to review applications on January 24, February 7, and March 14, 2011. The following requests for FY12 CPA funding were presented at the CPC's Public Hearing on March 28, 2011 and approved for presentation at Town Meeting in May:

PENDING APPLICATIONS FOR FY12 CPA FUNDING

Project Sponsor	\$ Amount Requested	Project Description
Conservation Commission	\$20,000	Continuation of phased field preservation project
Historical Commission and Board of Selectmen	\$850,000	Exterior renovation of Old Library
Housing Partnership	\$100,000	Funding to explore the feasibility of affordable housing options at 68–71 & 74 Warren Ave.
Town Manager	\$16,020	Staff assistance to support the Housing Partnership and acquisition of housing functions through a regional housing office
Field Steering Committee	\$82,500	Design fees for Gail Rd. & High School Fields 1 & 2*

*** Will be passed over at Town Meeting if An Act to Sustain Community Development has not become law by that time.**

Celebrate Mom

at Daryl Christopher

ALL YEAR!

Each month Mom can enjoy a
Daryl Christopher
Signature Facial
or a
Swedish Body Massage.

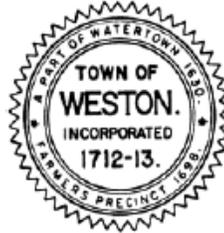
Purchase two series,
6 months of each,
then have MOM choose which
relaxing, personalized treatment
she would like to look forward to
each month.(priced at \$83.33 each)
(a \$1200.00 value, save \$200.00
when you purchase two series)

This Gift of Health is Priceless.



Daryl Christopher
840 Winter Street @ Healthpoint
Waltham, MA 02451
781.890.9211

www.dchristopher.com



TOWN OF WESTON Council on Aging Vacancy

Council on Aging Vacancy - The Town of Weston will soon have two openings on the Council on Aging. The Council is made up of thirteen members appointed by the Board of Selectmen and meets at 8:30 a.m. on the third Thursday of the month. Board members also participate on committees and special programs. The Council on Aging (COA) serves all Weston residents with information and referrals concerning issues of health, housing, health insurance, in-home assistance, legal matters and property and income taxes. The following services are presently arranged through the Council on Aging: free transportation to medical appointments (provided by FISH), low cost taxi transportation, fuel assistance (provided by Friends of the Council on Aging), a medical loan closet and a food pantry. Under the COA's Outreach Program, a trained staff member may consult with seniors at home or in the COA office. In addition to the staff, the COA is supported by over 200 volunteers.

Current Board interests include the addition of transportation options for seniors, enhancement of supports for caregivers, increase in opportunities for social interaction among the elderly, and improvement in the public awareness of COA programs and resources.

The Council on Aging Board is looking to fill the vacancies with people interested in working on its programs. Knowledge or experience in marketing or publicity as well as good organizational skills would be helpful. Please send letter of interest with background information by email to selectmen@westonmass.org or by mail to the Town of Weston, Board of Selectmen, P. O. Box 378, Weston, MA 02493 by Friday, June 4, 2011.

The background of the advertisement features a stylized American flag. The top portion consists of horizontal stripes, and the rest of the page is filled with a pattern of white stars of varying sizes, some appearing to glow or have a soft shadow.

***Omni Foods
is proud
to support
the fine work
of the
League of
Women Voters.***

Omni Foods
SUPERMARKETS

21 Center Street,
Weston, MA
Phone: 781-894-0675

CIVICS BEE

Katty Chace

The 3rd Annual Civics Bee took place on Sunday, April 3rd at the Sudbury Middle School. As always, each town (Weston, Wayland and Sudbury) put up an inter-generational team consisting of three adults, three High School students and three Middle School students. Weston's team members were Court Chilton, Beth Nolan, Ed Coburn, Tommy Fitzgerald, Matthew Chernick, Ed Kwiatkowski, Matthew Beaudry, Natasha Joglekar, Joanna Tao and Katherine Binney.



The registration table at the Middle School. Katty Chace (left) helps organize the name cards.

Middle School Social Studies teacher Ed McLaughlin and High School teacher Monny Cochran selected the student members (McLaughlin with classroom competitions), and also served as coaches. Citizens Education

Committee of the Massachusetts League Chair Jo-Ann Berry served as Moderator, and Boston College Constitutional Law Professor Richard Albert did a wonderful job as Judge for the second year in a row.

In addition to questions about the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Amendments, there was special emphasis this year on the Supreme Court and some of its most ground-breaking decisions. We also featured a section on voting regulations, which was considered especially valuable for our High School participants, since they are turning 18 and, hopefully, registering to vote. There was also a portion of the quiz called "Do You Know Your Representatives?".

The questions, which included different formats, including lightning round, true/false, multiple choice and matching, were significantly more difficult than in previous years. Some in the audience commented that they couldn't have answered many of the questions. In the end, Sudbury won the competition and took home the eagle trophy, which was quite satisfying, since the Bee was held on their home turf, and they had come in 3rd in the two previous years. Now each town has won once. The program will be featured on the Weston Cable station in the near future.

The three teams huddle at separate tables in the school cafeteria, for some last-minute preparation.





The three teams in position on stage. From left: Weston, the Judges' table, Wayland and Sudbury, with the podium at the center.



Team Weston.

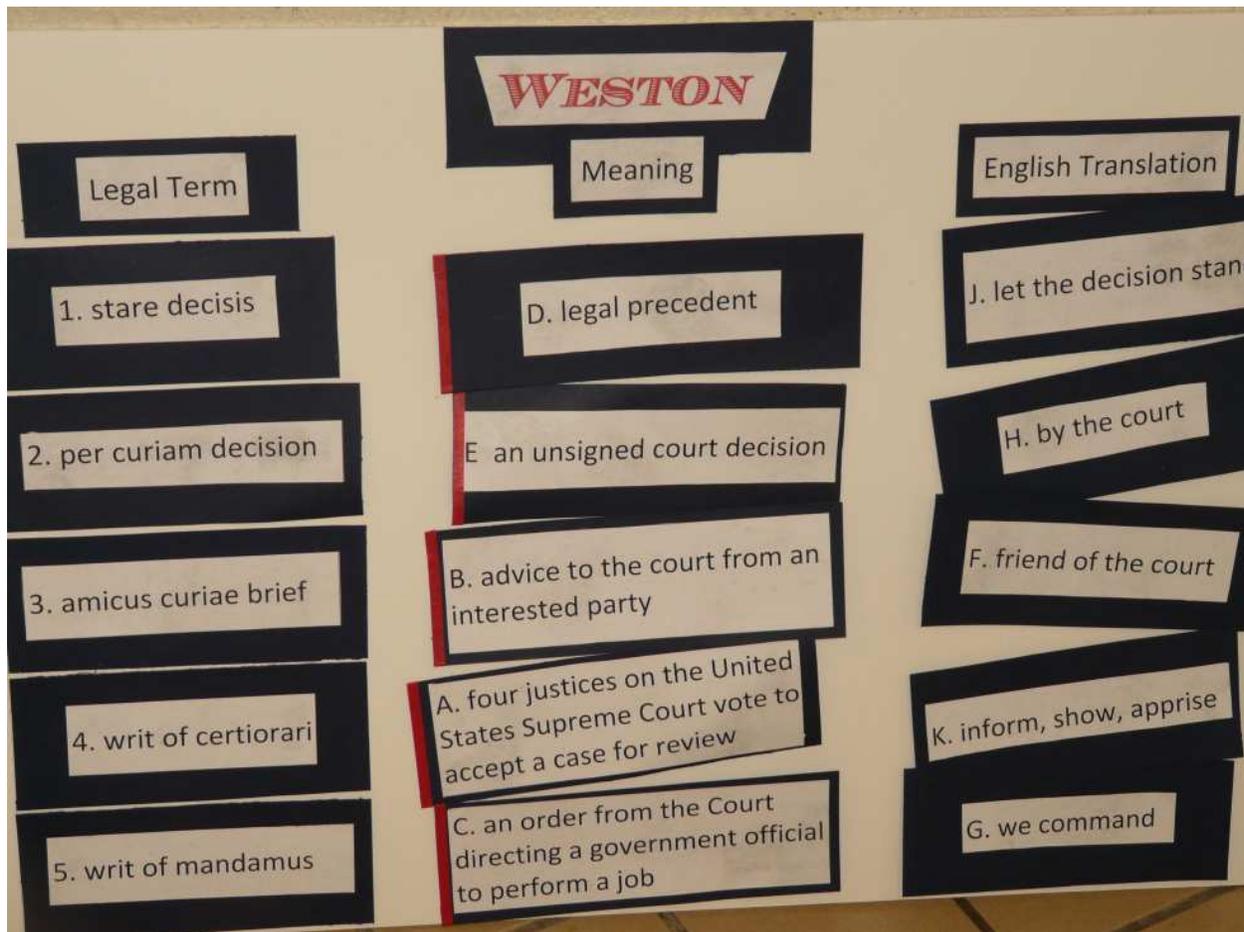


Judge Prof. Richard Albert takes civics questions from the audience while awaiting the final tally of the score.



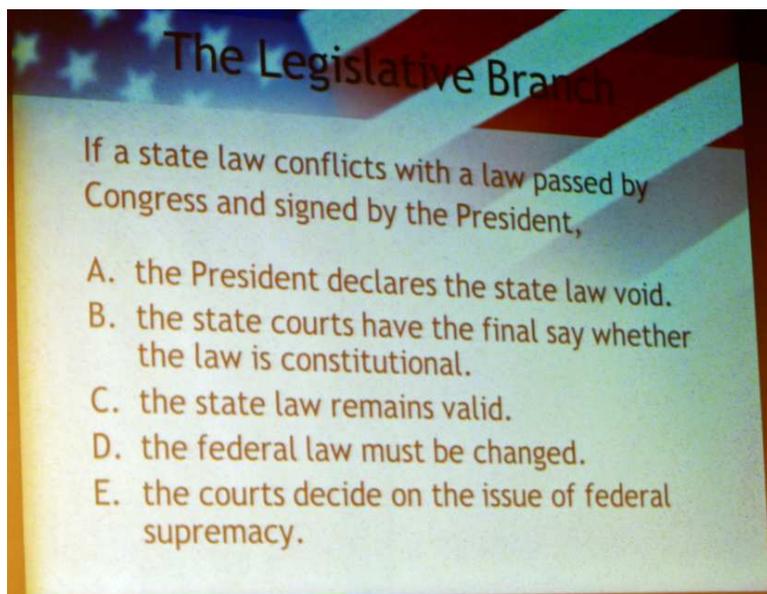
Tommy Fitzgerald, Beth Nolan and Joanna Tao ponder their reply to the question.

COULD YOU HAVE ANSWERED THE QUESTIONS THE TEAMS WERE ASKED?
See the next page for some examples.



In the test above, each team was given a similar card, and the challenge was to match the legal term with both its correct English translation and its correct meaning in law.

The questions posed to the competitors were projected on a screen for the benefit of the audience.



This one is multiple choice.

Photographs by Katherine Wolfthal

DAY ON THE HILL

Katty Chace

Last week, Robin Coutts and I attended the Massachusetts League's annual Day on the Hill, which usually serves a double purpose. First, we hear from state legislators. Senator James Eldridge from Arlington spoke about a subject dear to his heart: clean elections. He said his interest in government was sparked by a conference he attended at a teenager, where he was sponsored by the Arlington League. He has sponsored three bills: An Act Relative to Disclosure of Public Spending (requiring corporations and labor union paying for political advertisements to disclose their spending), An Act Relative to Accountability for Corporate Political Spending (requiring disclosure of corporate contributions to stockholders), and An Act Restoring Public Confidence in Government by Eliminating "Pay-to-Play Opportunities", which would prohibit principals of state contractors (with contracts of \$50K or greater) and their immediate families from contributing to statewide or legislative candidates for office. Senator Eldridge also champions environmental protection, public transportation, housing and a single payer health system.

Later, Senator Stanley Rosenberg, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Redistricting, explained the process now underway of redistricting all Congressional, and State Senatorial and House districts. He described the process as "a 12 dimensional chess game", obviously made more complicated by the loss of one Congressional seat. Amongst the factors that must be taken into account are the raw numbers of each district, which are strictly defined and based on the recent federal census, voting groups which

must be balanced (Asian, Hispanic, African-American), and communities of interest (such as regional schools, water districts, etc.). When considering which Congressmen should be retained, he mentioned that five of our current ten Congressmen hold seniority for the minority party on important committees (Olver, Neal, Markey, McGovern, Frank). If the House were to become Democratic again, those Congressmen would become Chairmen, and their seniority is a benefit to the state. The redistricting must be completed by November 2011, in time for the November 2012 elections (and the September 2012 primaries). It is common for redistricting decisions to be appealed in court. That happened in 42 states during the last redistricting ten years ago. His committee will hold thirteen hearings across the state, and also solicits public input at their website at www.mass.gov. Senator Rosenberg briefly discussed the controversy around whether redistricting should be done by an independent commission rather than a legislative committee. He opined that legislative committees actually outperform independent commissions, and are more accountable.

The second part of Day on the Hill is devoted to an unveiling by state League specialists of legislation in specific areas which the League will actively support or oppose. We heard about legislation in the areas of election process and voting rights, casino gambling, environment and natural resources, meeting basic human needs and patient safety. We will try to keep you informed about these bills as they come up for consideration in the next year.